Week ending April 2 1949

Every Thursday Threepence

JOHN BULL

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by CLAUD MORRIS

The Russian as a Fighting Man

by LIDDELL HART

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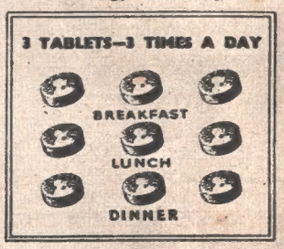

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AS109

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BUILDING SOCIETY

Extracts from the Statement of Accounts, 31st January, 1949

TOTAL ASSETS	£148,228,331
SHARE & DEPOSIT FUNDS	£139,016,457
MORTGAGES	£103,880,908
TRUSTEE SECURITIES & CASH	£43,835,650
RESERVES	£8,839,136

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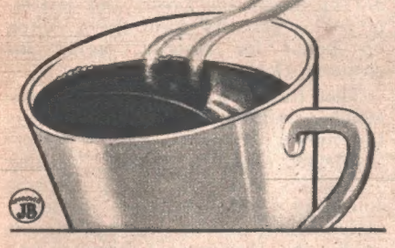

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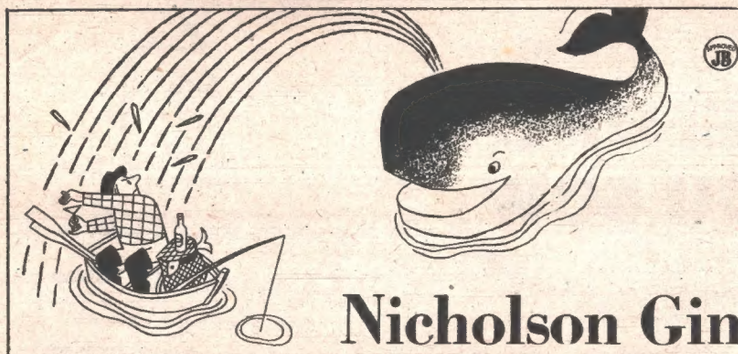

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EDITORIAL

HEALTH GAP THAT MUST BE CLOSED

THERE ARE 57,000 vacant beds in hospitals throughout the country —and 4,800 more in sanatoria. Yet almost every week brings news of appalling delays in getting desperately ill patients into hospital. That these delays often result in tragedy is proved by reports of sick people of all ages, varying from infants to old-age pensioners, who have died after their doctors have spent hours vainly trying to get them admitted to hospital.

Shortage of nurses is still the crux of the problem. Although, in fact, we have 35,000 more nurses than in 1938, we still need a further 40,000.

The Ministry of Health is fully aware of the situation, but is reluctant to throw extra beds into service until they can be adequately staffed. This is a wise decision. Improvements recently won for the nurses, such as the ninety-six hour fortnight, must not be jeopardized, or recruitment will be retarded.

Nevertheless, we must have more nurses—and quickly.

The Ministry is constantly urging hospital management committees to redouble their recruiting efforts, and though some have responded vigorously, others have shown little or no initiative.

AN example of what *can* be done has just been given by the Paddington Group, which embraces twenty-one hospitals and clinics in the London area. Apart from providing brighter, more comfortable living quarters for nurses, it has approved new uniforms to replace the drab, severe "institutional" garments which probably repulsed many a prospective candidate in the past.

West End designers have competed to create new frock-like uniforms in attractive colours, so that even the most junior probationers now know they can appear smart in their uniforms and not look like "something from an orphanage."

Again, at a sanatorium in the Severn Valley nearly half the beds stood empty a couple of years ago because of staff shortage. Today, all are full and an additional wing has been opened, thanks to an intensive recruiting drive for part-time nurses.

WHAT has thus been achieved locally in a few areas can surely be repeated on a national scale. But it will need a lot more "ginger" from above.

First, we should like to see a vast extension of the part-time principle. The Ministry of Health itself admits that the system has come to stay and that there are 20,000 part-timers today against 2,600 in 1946. Why not make an all-out drive to develop this idea?

But to be of real value, part-time service must be reasonable. The casual person who only wants to do an odd hour or two when it happens to be convenient is useless. To establish a definite rota it is essential that part-timers should promise a reliable minimum of two or three days a week.

This means big-scale organizing, and the machinery is there in the ten Regional Offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service and its twenty-seven nursing appointments offices and 1,000 local offices. All that is necessary is for this machinery to be geared up for greater effort.

OF course, the part-time system is not confined to nurses. Untrained helpers can be valuable in many other ward duties—such as sweeping, dusting, cleaning, answering telephones, running messages, checking and mending linen, cutting bread and butter, preparing patients' meal trays, ruling up books for records, caring for patients' clothes, and so on.

Then there is a mass of clerical work which part-time helpers can lift from the nurses' shoulders—taking papers and letters round to patients, checking admissions and entering up records, collecting and checking patients' ration books, making out appointment cards, the checking of laundry and stores, distributing sick certificates for in-patients and dozens of similar duties.

Eased of all such extraneous duties, existing nursing staffs might well take on additional beds and still enjoy their ninety-six hour fortnight.

Much can thus be done by extending the part-time system. But we must also have many more full-time nurses. We do not think it enough for the Ministry to prod hospital management committees from time to time.

WE should like to see a very great intensification of all the methods by which newcomers have been attracted to the profession in recent years.

This implies an even closer co-operation between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and the Central Office of Information in extending the scope of Press advertising, posters, films and exhibitions.

Useful work has been done, we know, by mobile exhibition vans. But there are only three vans in service. A fleet is needed to cover the country adequately.

And the cost? Though the Minister of Health has asked Regional Hospital Boards to effect reductions in expenditure, he has made it clear that the welfare of patients must not be affected. Economies, therefore, must be confined to less essential development schemes. No one can deny the priority demand to close the dangerous gap in our nursing services.

John Bull 186 High Holborn London W.C.1

APRIL 2, 1949 VOLUME 85 NUMBER 2231 Phone: TEMple Bar 2468 Gram: Heroically, Westcent, London

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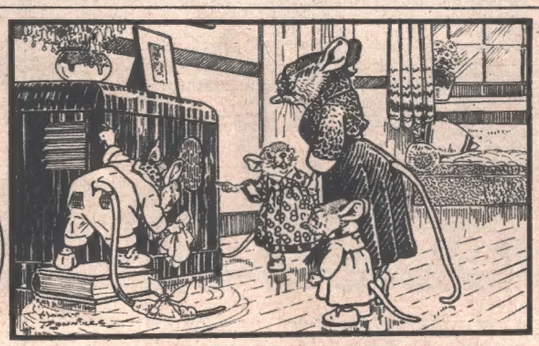

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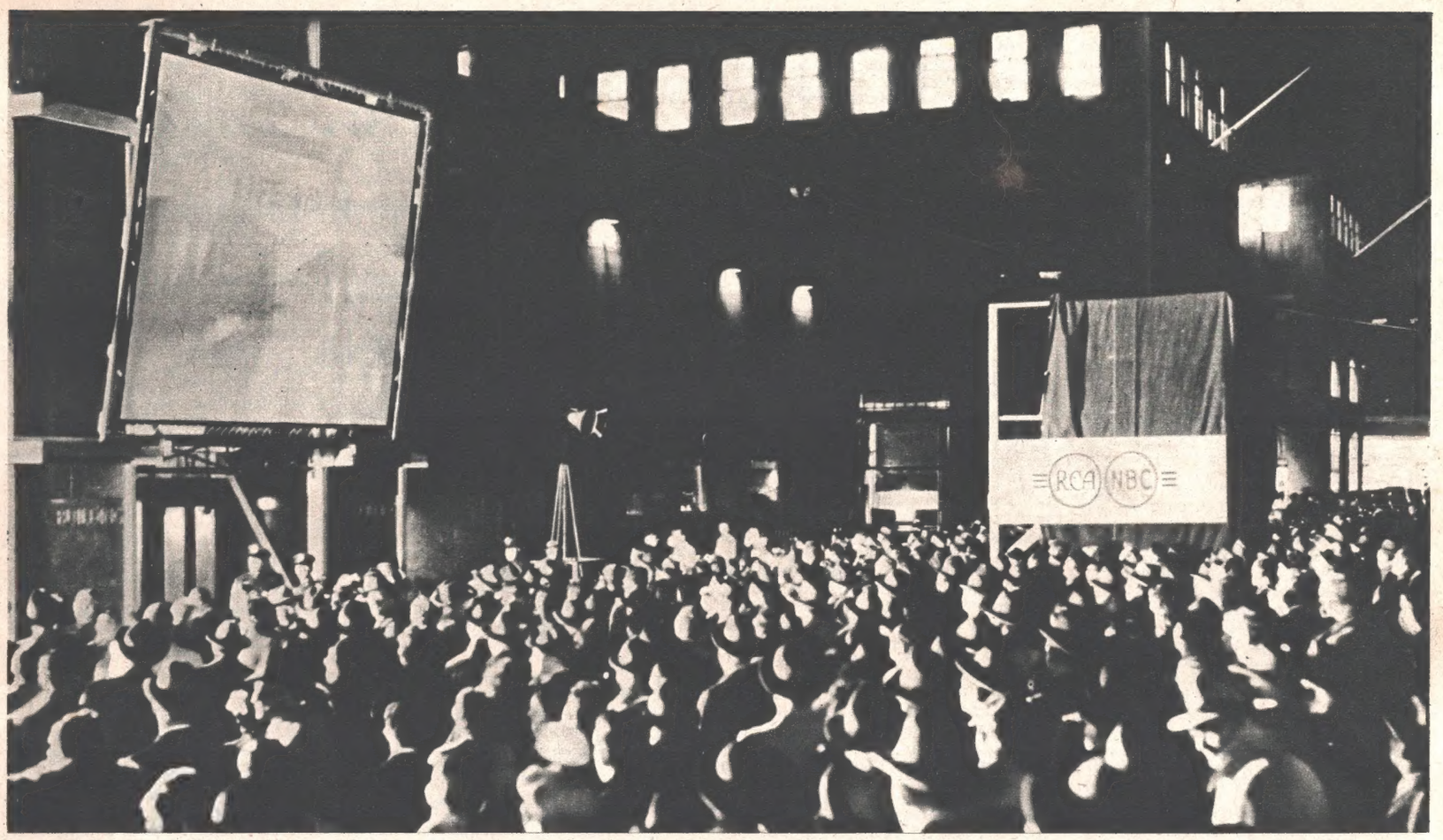


A square in New York City: television-gazing in streets and pubs as well as at home has become national habit—and may even oust radio

TELEVISION FOR EVERYBODY

by CLAUD MORRIS

In America it *is* part of everyone's life; here it is still a luxury. Now is the time for a go-ahead policy

WARREN WADE is a rolypoly little man with a laugh which makes him shake like a friendly bear. Day in and day out he puts on more television shows than any other man in the world.

As programme manager for the National Broadcasting Company of America he hires the best British artists when they visit Manhattan—people like Gracie Fields and Beatrice Lillie, whom Alexandra Palace cannot afford as part of a daily diet.

When I saw him in New York, he told me: "I may be biased, but America is, after a bad start, years ahead of Britain in television. We have thirty working stations in thirteen different cities. Television is available today to 25,000,000, who can walk into their local radio shops, pick up a set—and start viewing. In most cities from New York to the Middle West there is a pick of two programmes—with at least one show somewhere on the dial from morning to midnight."

And John McDonald, executive vice-president in charge of finance for N.B.C., who controls the cash-box and brain-box of this giant corporation, had a startling thing to say: "We have already sold a million sets compared to the 100,000 sold in Britain. On the plans we have laid, and are fast executing, American television will completely replace radio within five years."

When I first followed Craig Allen, an N.B.C. producer, into the lift of his office building, he made this aside: "I thought by now you British would have television available to people in Edinburgh and Plymouth. Weren't you supposed to be the early birds in this business?"

The fact is, we *were* the early birds. From the days when long-haired Mr. Baird invented what he called the "shadowgraph," and added eyes to radio, we were supposed to be ahead, technically and in many other ways.

Now it's a different story. You can walk the length of any British city today without realizing that such a thing as television exists. But you cannot walk a hundred yards in New York, Washington, Cleveland, Chicago or Los Angeles, without seeing that something that hits the lives of millions has happened to the world of entertainment and information.

The reason for U.S. supremacy—to put it simply—is a matter of men, mikes and money.

Americans are spending about twenty times as much cash a day on television, in one of their thirty stations alone, as does the B.B.C. for the whole of Britain. They are attracting to the industry most of the girls with twenty-one-inch waists who used to go to Hollywood, and most of the men with bulging waistcoats who might have become the Alfred Hitchcocks of tomorrow.

American television, like British, is not yet making money. N.B.C. alone is losing about a million pounds a year, but considers it the correct thing that television should be financed out of part of the income from ordinary radio. After the two-millionth set is installed, some time this year, television will, they say, really begin to pay.

Yet another factor in American television growth is that initiative in building stations does not spring from a single main centre like London. Any local body in a small city like Albuquerque, New Mexico, or Erie, Pennsylvania, can build a transmitter for about £80,000. The initial financing of television is thereby spread through the whole community.

I have watched shows in London, and been to Alexandra Palace. How do the programmes compare? First, U.S. television has some advantages. Programmes are more convincing, with spontaneity as one of the greater charms.

Television in America—and this is a lesson to study as we develop our own services in Britain—has not gone after well-known or even little-known names in radio. It has cared little for the traditional people—the competent gasbags who, too often in radio, once discovered, are handed on from programme to programme.

As a rule in London, people before the television cameras are slightly awed by the cameras themselves and the polite folk who lead them forward to be photographed. There is also an entrenched idea that to attain an effect of spontaneity hours of rehearsal are needed. In America I watched two or three thirty-minute shows which had been rehearsed for only an hour. This cuts costs to a minimum. And quite a large proportion of shows go on the air completely unrehearsed.

As an example of spontaneity, take news. In a station like WPIX, New York, newsreel camera cars are ready to cover events as they happen. The scenes at a big fire, for instance, may be flashed on to the television screen within a few minutes of the outbreak.

Then look, once again, at personnel. American television is full of showmen and impresarios, people like Warren

Wade, himself an ex-variety actor. It is as if a showman like Sid Field were put in charge of B.B.C. television. This might cause a few raised eyebrows in Portland Place. But in America they have found that by providing variety entertainment—girls, jazz and comedians—the sales leap.

In London the television producer appears to aim at entertaining a select audience of about a hundred thousand, mostly middle-class people who can afford the expensive sets. The London producer also, to some extent, counts on the fact that his viewer is a "fan"—who stops all conversation when the show goes on.

The American producer bases his programme on the theory that it is competing with other interests. The phone suddenly rings, the baby cries, the door opens and shuts, the pipe goes out, somebody says, "Oh, shut it off; let's go to the cinema." Reckoning that the eye is at least as fickle as the ear, they aim to keep listener interest at a high pitch.

House Full—but Saw It

One Saturday I tried to push my way into Madison Square Garden to see a fight. All the cheaper seats were full. But I still saw the match—from a television set in a nearby bar. Behind me (a scene to be duplicated at that moment in thousands of taverns all over America) were men stacked four deep, eyes glued to the screen. Ten thousand bars have sets in New York alone, and the brewers say they are showing a thirty per cent increase in trade.

There is less "narrowness" in America about selling a fight to television. After their earlier resentment, promoters have now decided that television eventually puts more money in the box office. But, of course—and this I suspect has more than something to do with it—U.S. television pays first-class prices. One network bought the return rights of the Louis-Walcott fight for £20,000.

A Brooklyn bartender, fed up with the people who come to gaze at such mammoth free shows, has put chairs in rows facing his televisor. Row one is for whisky drinkers. Row two is for bourbon and gin drinkers. The last row, and standing room only, is for beer drinkers.

That sort of thing won't happen in Britain yet—perhaps not for years—but it is just an indication of what can happen to a nation once television really hits it. At first the idea of mass entertainment on television is frightening. But there are large benefits. Television has done what all the preachers and sociologists could not do—it is turning the American home into a real family centre once again. Pool rooms, dance halls and cinemas have been affected by the "stay at home to enjoy yourself" habit.

Television has also meant a revival of national theatre. Dramatic societies put on their plays in front of the television cameras from the local station. Since each station can transmit only a matter of forty miles, "local" appeal dominates the programmes.

Made Him a Star

In the professional sphere, variety artists and music hall comedians have been given a new audience of millions.

Britain has yet to produce a single top-notch star of the quality of Milton Berle. Berle used to be a typical night club entertainer, and no great success on the radio. Suddenly, over television, because of his clowning antics, he has become a nation-wide star. His pay, he tells me, is over a thousand pounds a week.

We have yet to produce singing stars, belonging exclusively to television, of the girlish beauty and attractiveness of Kyle McDonnell. We have yet to produce informal, lazy-voiced announcers like C.B.S.'s Arthur Godfrey, a kind of American Wilfred Pickles.

After this catalogue of U.S. achievement I don't think, however, that we should think too badly of our own B.B.C. It has several credit marks, and several advantages over American television, which could put it in the lead once again, *provided it was given sufficient money to develop its services.*

First of all, the B.B.C. produces better television drama than any U.S. station. This is perhaps because London has more first-rate dramatic actors available. Whereas Broadway in New York excels in musicals like *Oklahoma!*, or *Inside U.S.A.*, it is a poor city for straight acting on the legitimate stage.

Sales Talk Sickened

Secondly, the B.B.C. is free from the annoying sponsor-worship of American television which, sooner or later, by turning what could be a magnificent medium for the public good into a cheap circus for selling soap, silk stockings and motor cars, may bog down television's full development. I was thrilled by the showmanship of it all, but sick of seeing the tragic and brave news of the day sandwiched between salesmen's pleas.

In television as it stands today, three things are possible. First, it can be deliberately held back for lack of money. Or it can be deliberately foisted on the customers—which is what is being done in part, in U.S.A. Or it can follow an orderly and logical development.

When Norman Collins, director of B.B.C. Television, came back from the States recently, he said he thought we had "nothing to learn." I would qualify that statement by saying that we have nothing to learn from soap-box commercialism. But we do have a great deal to learn in terms of programme planning and presentation of fast, efficient features.

The main complaint is that at the moment the B.B.C. has not the money to spend on developing television. Somehow money *must* be made available.

Another complaint in Britain is that we can't compete because we are short of special glass to make cathode ray tubes. But a scientist in Bristol has invented a substitute material, a tube made of plastics, which greatly lowers the set cost. Who is to get the benefit of this British invention? Its patent has already been sold to America for about £1,000,000.

Export Business, Too

It is America, therefore, that looks like gaining the vast television export markets for completed sets. She is producing one and a half million sets this year compared to our 80,000.

India, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand—all will offer large television markets within the next few years. Is America to get these markets?

Now is the time, surely, for the B.B.C. to review its television activities and increase its appropriation from the present £1,000,000 a year, so that the hardworking men of Alexandra Palace get a fair chance of competing with—and I think one day, soon, of beating—the Americans. It's no use waiting until we get more listeners "to pay the way." We won't, until we get more and better programmes—and the transmitters to put them out.

There's no question about the hundreds of thousands of new fans or of the income which would come in the end.

Are the Americans the only ones who can think up a five-year plan to replace radio? Britain, with her compact, fifty-million audience, offers a television opportunity which could beat America hollow.

If we go full out on television, what new developments are likely? Claud Morris will describe some of them in a further article

THE RUSSIAN AS

And what we might expec

by Captain B. H. LIDDELL HART

THE RED ARMY is an embodiment of contrasts. Its strange mingling of new and old, of scientific method and primitive habit, of rigidity and flexibility, is even more marked on the tactical than on the material side.

That is natural—for the machines are the product of men, and handled by them.

German soldiers are the only ones in the West who have had experience, or even close observation, of the Red Army in action—and they have seen it during successive stages of development under the hardest test. It is to their experience that we must go for any real information about its performance and methods.

Two essential points emerge from their accounts. The Red Army is two in one—there is an "army of quality" within the "army of quantity," and although even the former is of curiously mixed quality it has developed at a much faster pace than the mass which encloses it.

The other point is that any judgment on the Red Army should be accompanied by the date of its vintage, just as we know a wine by its year. An expert who has only tasted "Red Army 1941" may be quite misleading about "Red Army 1943," and so on. While the differences of vintage are likely to be less marked since the war ended, it is not safe to assume that the present quality is the same as that of 1945. But a knowledge of certain basic tendencies may be a guide to the question whether it is likely to have improved or otherwise.

In examining the wartime record, it is natural to begin with the leadership.

When I asked Field Marshal von Rundstedt which were the best Russian generals he met, his verdict was terse: "None was any good in 1941."

Rundstedt's chief opponent, on the southern front, was the famous cavalryman, Marshal Budenny, one of the legendary heroes of the Civil War. Rundstedt remarked that the aptest description of Budenny was provided by a captured Russian officer, who said: "He is a man with an immense moustache, but a very small brain."

Budenny had been an imposing member of the "military court" called to sit in judgment on the generals who were arraigned for treason in 1937, and it is clear that this wholesale *political* purge had very damaging effects on the capacity of the Red Army to meet the test of war. The 1941 invasion showed that incompetence was preponderant in all levels of command.

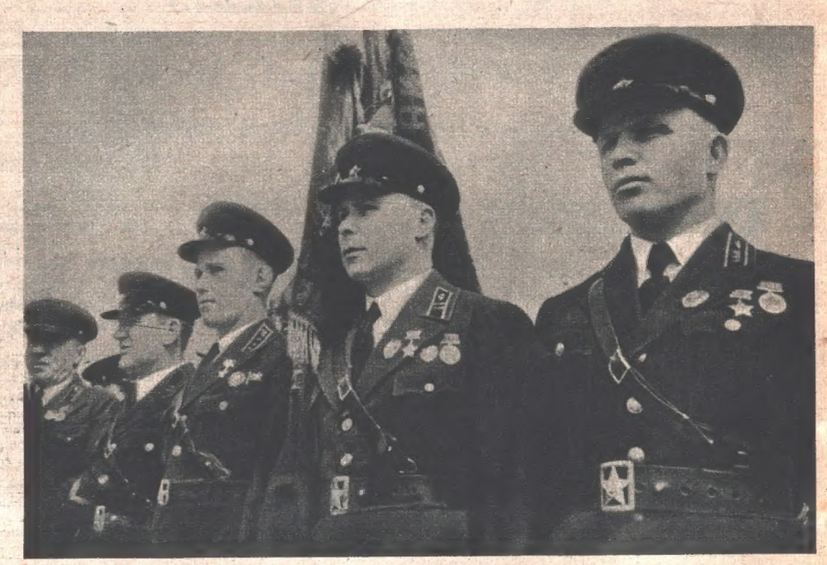
But the subsequent *military* purge had better results, opening the way for the rise of talented commanders who could prove their case in the more realistic "trial by battle." The combination of practical test with wider opportunity produced a remarkable change. By 1942 the level of leadership was rising, and it went on rising year by year while the war lasted.

All the German generals to whom I talked expressed high admiration for the ability of Marshal Zhukov, whom they regarded as outstanding. Next to him they placed Marshal Koniev, praising him as a clever tactician.

Shaky in the Middle

They considered that quite a number of the other higher commanders had become skilled in the art of manoeuvring large forces, but that the proportion of able leaders tended to decrease on the lower levels of the High Command, where less scope was allowed for initiative.

The run of opinion was that the top and bottom of the Russian ladder of command became the strongest sections, while the middle piece was shaky. The top rungs were filled by men who had proved themselves so able that they were allowed to exercise their own judgment, and could safely insist on doing things in their own way. The bottom rungs were filled by junior officers who, within their limited sphere, tended to develop a good tactical sense,



On parade: proportion of regulars in Russia's peacetime army is high

A FIGHTING MAN

from him if he fought us

because the incompetent soon fell in a field that was ruled by the hard realities of the enemy's bullets and shells.

But the intermediate commanders, even more than in most armies, were concerned with other factors. Their superiors' orders and judgments were more to be feared than the enemy.

Tactically, the best troops were the so-called armoured corps—here the level of intelligence among officers and men was much above the average. I use the term "so-called" because in fact the actual armoured element was only a small part of them; they had from 200 to 300 tanks, and no other armoured vehicles. The composition of these corps varied—here the Russians had a strong sense of flexibility — but was usually either one or two tank brigades, the latter in turn consisting of one tank battalion and some four infantry battalions carried in lorries.

Cut Out an H.Q.

The battalions were small by Western standards, and German officers have remarked to me that the Russians profited much in tactical effectiveness by having such handier-sized units. The corps itself was little larger than one of our divisions.

In the case of these armoured corps there were no divisional headquarters interposed; by cutting out this extra link in the chain of command and letting the corps commander handle direct as many as half a dozen brigades, time was saved and flexibility gained.

The Russian High Command rarely placed these armoured corps under the control of the ordinary armies, but grouped two to six of them in what were called "armoured armies," and kept them for special striking rôles. That was wiser than our normal habit of putting armoured divisions under an infantry commander, who is apt to be pedestrianly minded and accustomed to slow-motion warfare.

The Russians were careful not only to keep their "army of quality" distinct, but to ensure that it was treated as such.

When the battlefront became static after one of the big bounds that the Russians periodically made, these "armoured armies" were withdrawn into reserve. There was then usually an interval of several months before the Russians had repaired the communications and brought up supplies, ready to launch a fresh offensive.

The cracking of the enemy's new defence-line was left to the ordinary infantry armies, helped by a reinforcement of artillery and also tank units from the Higher Command's general reserve.

Armour Waited to Pounce

In a detailed account that was given me of a typical Russian offensive in the later stages of the war, the methods pursued were made very clear. The assault was delivered by three armies, with some thirty infantry divisions, concentrated on a sector twenty-five miles wide. Similar attacks were simultaneously launched on other sectors of the entire front. An armoured army was waiting in readiness behind the front.

The infantry assault was preceded by a bombardment lasting two hours by some 1,200 guns, and the infantry then pushed forward, eating gradually into the German defensive position. By the third day, after fresh divisions had been put into action, the position was broken through. The armoured army moved forward just before the break-through had actually been achieved, completed it, and then pushed forward as fast as possible "into the depth" of open country beyond.

Similar breaks-through had been made in other sectors, and the loose-linked chain of exploiting armoured armies swept on nearly 300 miles, penetrating successive rear positions where the Germans attempted a stand, before the surge was brought to a halt.

The Russian infantry assaults usually suffered heavy losses in achieving their breaching purpose in this battering ram style. It often happened that assault after assault was shattered by the defenders' fire.

On the other hand, the small infantry units often showed skill and cunning in the way they went on "trickling through" after the formal assault had failed. Thereby they redeemed the failure, and turned the scales. With shrewd instinct, junior leaders often chose to advance over ground, such as marsh, that appeared to be a barrier to advance. If a handful of men trickled through in this way in the evening, they might swell to a thousand or more by daylight—and the threat played on the Germans' nerves.

Russian tank tactics also showed a mixture of formality and ingenuity. In 1941 the Russians had tied their fast tanks down to the service of the infantry—the same mistake that the French had made to a large extent in 1940. But even when they learned to concentrate their tanks in armoured corps, and to handle these operationally, they still went back to the "penny packet" method when assaulting an enemy position.

Briefed to the Last Detail

Their tank tactics were of a drill pattern, with each step carefully planned in advance. Before an attack, the subordinate commanders were given maps on which their routes and objectives were marked by coloured lines. Such extremely detailed planning suggests that the executants were not highly intelligent, or that it was a policy not to allow much scope for individual judgment and initiative.

Attacks ran much on the first World War lines, with tanks closely backed up by the infantry. The assault was delivered by a long chain of mixed packets, with a company of tanks leading a company of infantry. The Russian companies were small, ten tanks and eighty infantrymen, which allowed some degree of local flexibility.

Once the enemy position had been broken through, the tanks would concentrate and continue the advance in a large body until another defensive position was reached. The Russian tank forces became, with experience, skilled in manoeuvring in mass during these intermediate stages, but assault methods remained more stereotyped than in other armies.

Their tactical limitations were accentuated by the extreme simplicity of their equipment. The mechanized formations had only two kinds of vehicle, the tank and the lorry — no reconnaissance machines, staff cars or motor cycles. If they wanted to send a written message or an order, they had to send it in a

Continued on page 16

Red Army tankman: he is one of the élite in an oddly blended force

The drums rolled. Hercule stepped up to the lion, ready to put his head between Leo's gigantic dentures

LEO

MR. BULLITT WATCHED the last peg being hammered deep into the sandy soil. Then he stepped back and studied the circus tent. He was a squat, broadly built man with a paunch discreetly modified by a crimson waistcoat plentifully ornamented with silver buttons. A partiality for whisky had etched a lacework of purple veins in his cheeks and served to accentuate his nose, which stood out in the middle of his face like a door knocker.

The erection of the tent had been a troublesome business, and Mr. Bullitt had several times doubted the wisdom of his decision to pitch it in the sand dunes below the town. The sandy soil did not readily grip the wooden pegs, and again and again the ropes had to be lengthened so as to reach to the nearest tuft of grass and firmer soil; but the proximity of the annual harness races, which were run on the strand, was an important commercial consideration.

Mr. Bullitt stood for a moment preoccupied, his chin sunk on his cravat; then he roused himself and made his way between the welter of caravans and circus paraphernalia until he came to a large cage mounted on wheels.

Three urchins were standing in front of it, staring in awe at the lion reclining inside. He was a very bedraggled sort of lion, and though his eyes were half-open, he didn't seem to be thinking of anything in particular.

As Mr. Bullitt came to a halt, the oldest of the urchins was slowly reading aloud the faded inscription which ran in curly letters along the top of the cage: "Leo the Man-Eating Lion."

"Gawd!" whispered the smallest boy. "Isn't he awful?"

Mr. Bullitt dug a match from the pocket of his crimson waistcoat and lighted it with a quick stroke of his fingernail. He applied the flame to his cheroot and made a loud sucking sound. The lion immediately raised a moth-eaten snout, and he and Mr. Bullitt contemplated each other in silence. Leo, however, appeared to see nothing of interest in Mr. Bullitt, and the effort of gazing at his owner seemed to exhaust him: his tawny eyes became glazed, he blinked in a bored fashion, wrinkled up his nose and opened his mouth in a colossal yawn.

"He hasn't got any teeth," hissed one of the small boys.

"Get to hell out of here!" snapped Mr. Bullitt, making a threatening move in the direction of the youngsters, who immediately broke and scuttled away between the tents. The circus owner turned on his heel and went up the steps into the caravan where Hercule the Lion Tamer was sitting on a stool before the bucket which contained the gruel for Leo's evening meal.

"That animal," began Mr. Bullitt, "that animal isn't in a fit state to be seen. Folks are beginning to take notice that he hasn't got any teeth. You should have screwed in his dentures before we came into town."

Hercule paused in his work and glanced across at the two huge dental plates which hung from a nail on the far wall. They were a masterpiece of the dental surgeon's art.

"Leo's gettin' old," objected Hercule. "He don't like having all that furniture in his mouth unnecessarily."

"You don't have to tell me that he's

THE TERROR

by MERVYN WALL

ILLUSTRATED BY STEVEN SPURRIER, A.R.A.

What if he was a moth-eaten old lion with false teeth? He was still entitled to a meal, and, by George, he'd go out and get one

gettin' old," snapped Mr. Bullitt. "He's a blinkin' Methuselah, but that's got nothing to do with it. We've got to keep the public in mind."

A look of obstinacy settled suddenly on the lion tamer's face. "You wouldn't like to have to walk around yourself," he said, "with a set of massive things like that clamped between your jaws."

"He doesn't have to walk around. All he has to do is lie in his cage all day in the lap of luxury, swallowin' the best of food and drink. He's better off than any of us. Anyway, his personal feelings have nothing to do with the matter. We all have to make sacrifices in the show business."

"All right," muttered Hercule.

"Another thing," said Mr. Bullitt, peering into the bucket. "We'll have to cut down on his grub. About half that much will do. You can keep the rest for his breakfast."

Hercule breathed hard through his nostrils. "How can the unfortunate animal be expected to do himself justice in his act when he's weak with the hunger? We've been cuttin' down on his grub for the past six weeks. First, we deprived him of his bit of meat——"

"Meat is bad for him at his age. It'll only give him blood-pressure. I can't afford to have him dying on my hands, a valuable animal like that. Anyway, it's a question of economics. Some of you fellows seem to think I'm made of money."

"That's another thing," said the lion tamer meaningly. "The staff is beginning to speculate as to whether they're ever going to be paid again. The clowns in particular is talking mighty nasty."

Mr. Bullitt stared at him for a moment, as if undecided whether or not to lose his temper. Then he removed the damp and shapeless cheroot from his mouth. "Come on out and have a drink. They've set up a bar on the strand."

FROM the edge of the sand dunes the whole fawn-coloured expanse of beach lay stretched before them, mile after mile of unbroken sand. They made their way towards the straggling crowd of some three or four hundred people who had congregated in the corner of the strand where the races were being held. Yokels stood about with their hands in their pockets staring at nothing or wandered aimlessly about.

The town's corner boys were clustered in the neighbourhood of the bookmakers' pitch, where four portly individuals in check suits and hard grey hats were shouting the odds for the last race. Nearby, half a dozen planks had been laid across upright barrels and crowned with a thin railing.

This was the judges' stand, and the three judges seemed to have brought their families and all their friends along with them.

"It's a shabby affair," said the lion tamer morosely.

"These small-town races always are," replied Mr. Bullitt.

Together they made their way to the refreshment tent. Their entry caused a stir of interest. As they pushed through the crowd towards the plank resting on two empty tea chests, which served as counter, room was made for them in the place of honour beside the police sergeant, a huge man whose mottled face was half-submerged in a pint tumbler.

"GOOD evening, gentlemen," said Mr. Bullitt, drawing a crumpled note from the pocket of his scarlet waistcoat and tossing it carelessly on the counter. There was a chorus of "Good evening, sir," from the circle of drinkers.

"You're the gentleman that runs the circus?" the sergeant asked.

"Yes, I'm Mr. Bullitt."

"I see that you have a whole menagerie of animals advertised — a waltzing buffalo and two performing seals. Ever since I was a child I've had a great liking for circus animals."

Mr. Bullitt coughed and looked at the floor. "We've had a heavy loss lately. The buffalo died on us. The posters were already printed, and I haven't had time to have them altered."

"That's too bad," said the sergeant.

"Was that long ago?" inquired a foxy man with a red scarf, who stood leaning on the counter beyond the sergeant.

Mr. Bullitt raised his eyes and looked at the stranger suspiciously. The words seemed to have been too softly spoken to be without some ulterior meaning. The man with the red scarf was a thin, auburn-haired fellow with a suggestion of a smile hovering permanently in the neighbourhood of his mouth.

"About four years ago," replied Mr. Bullitt brusquely and turned again to the sergeant.

"We have a man-eating lion, a most valuable animal," he said, "I wouldn't part with him for five hundred pounds."

"Did he ever eat anyone yet?" inquired the tramp with the red scarf.

Mr. Bullitt did not deign to reply. Instead, he turned to the sergeant. "Who's your companion?" he inquired coldly.

"Him? Do you not know him? I thought that rogue was known throughout the length and breadth of the land. He's Larry Hamill, the slipperiest poacher in the whole country. I've been trying to catch him for the past fifteen years and I haven't succeeded yet."

From long experience on the road, Mr. Bullitt knew the expediency of being on good terms with the representatives of local government, so he permitted himself a tight smile, but it faded as he caught sight of the quizzical mockery in Larry Hamill's face.

"Tell us about the last man your lion killed."

Mr. Bullitt stared disdainfully at the ragged poacher, but he could think of nothing crushing to say. He turned and looked at Hercule for assistance, but the lion tamer merely dropped his eyes and looked into his empty glass.

"Another two whiskies," snapped Mr. Bullitt.

When their glasses had been refilled, and Mr. Bullitt had slowly and thoughtfully placed a couple of coins on the counter, he turned and threw a contemptuous glance at the foxy-headed poacher. Then he cleared his throat importantly and addressed himself to the whole circle of listeners.

"The thing to remember about wild beasts is that, though they may be trained, they can never in fact be tamed. Isn't that so, Hercule?"

The lion tamer nodded bleakly.

The circus owner fixed his eyes haughtily on the poacher's red scarf. "You will understand that it is impossible for me openly to admit that Leo has taken human life. I would be cutting my own throat if I made such an admission, for the authorities would insist that he be destroyed. Isn't that so, Sergeant?"

The sergeant nodded in confirmation.

"In the interest of the show business my lips are sealed, but I can assure you that no more bloody-minded beast has ever walked the jungle. I doubt if his like has ever been seen for cold ferocity."

The audience was visibly impressed.

"The last lion tamer I had was so foolish as once to turn his back on Leo. He has regretted it ever since."

"What happened?" inquired the sergeant in a small voice.

"With one blow of his paw," said Mr. Bullitt dramatically, "Leo swept the buttock off him. He was never the same man after."

"It seems to be a dangerous occupation, lion taming," commented the sergeant. "I wouldn't fancy it at all."

"Dangerous!" echoed Mr. Bullitt. "The first lion tamer I had—well, I'd prefer not to talk about it."

He raised his hat reverently and, turning, gulped down his whisky as if the recollection of the terrible scene were too much for him. A gloom settled on his listeners. They stood silent, their pint tumblers gripped in their fists, staring dejectedly in front of them as if in sorrowful contemplation of the many hazards to which human life is subject. At that moment a man pushed his way through the crowd.

"You better come quick, Sergeant. They've chased a welshing bookmaker into the sea, and he refuses to come out without police protection."

The sergeant buttoned the collar of his tunic and left the tent. Mr. Bullitt, well satisfied with the impression which he had made, signed to Hercule, and they also pushed their way out into the open air. They walked back in silence towards the caravans among the sand dunes.

THE circus tent was crowded that night, and the spectators watched breathlessly as Leo was put through his paces. Hercule guided the lion with a long whip from one high stool to another. Leo climbed and sprang as directed, growling forlornly as he felt the twinges of rheumatism. When he sat on the highest stool of all and looked at the distance he would have to climb down again, he raised his muzzle in the air and howled as if heartbroken.

The sergeant in the front row wiped the sweat from his forehead and thought of the fate of Hercule's predecessors. The lion tamer kept Leo on the move, tipping and prodding him with the long whip, because there was a danger that if Leo was left for a few minutes sitting in the one place he would fall asleep.

At length the lion was guided down again, growling and complaining, to the floor of the cage, and Mr. Bullitt, stalking to the centre of the arena, announced in ringing tones the high spot of the evening—the intrepid Hercule would now place his head in the lion's mouth. A shudder of expectancy rippled through the audience, there was a roll of drums, and a green spotlight picked out Leo as he wearily opened his mouth and displayed his terrible fangs.

Hercule laid aside the whip and approached cautiously. He placed his two hands on Leo's corrugated cheeks, and, unnoticed by the audience, slipped the usual block of wood between the lion's back teeth, just in case Leo should grow tired of holding his mouth open and close it without giving due warning. Then the intrepid Hercule carefully insinuated his head between Leo's gigantic dentures.

Women screamed and buried their faces on the shoulders of their escorts, while the men, with white faces, stared fascinated at the terrible spectacle. Slowly Hercule withdrew his head, and there was another roll of drums, and a moment later he was bowing amid a thunder of applause.

WHEN the lights in the great tent had been extinguished, and a couple of cowboys were treading their way between the caravans, essaying the impossible task of hunting the children of the town away from the circus ground, Leo ambled slowly across his cage and peered into the bucket which contained his supper.

At first he could scarcely believe his eyes. He stared incredulously, but there was no mistake—the bucket was only half-full. He looked to left and right, and then, opening his jaws, emitted an indignant roar. It was a hollow, reverberating roar, which seemed to come from the depths of his stomach. Two small boys who had been fiddling with the catch on the door of the cage immediately sprang to the ground and raced off into the darkness.

Leo did not even bother to glance after them. He knew that the bars of the cage were there to protect him from human beings, and that as long as the bars were intact, he was safe; so he paid no attention to noises outside. Anyway, his mind was too taken up with his wrongs. He kept his eyes fixed on his meagre supper, growling at the bucket as he gradually backed away from it until his hindquarters came in contact with the door.

To his astonishment he felt the door opening behind him. He turned his head and studied this extraordinary phenomenon, slowly coming to a realization of the infinite possibilities which were opening before him. Normally he would never have thought of exchanging the safety of his cage for the unknown dangers of the outside world, but his mood at the moment was one of extreme exasperation.

If they weren't going to give him his

customary measure of food, be damned but he'd go and get it for himself. He did not hesitate for long. He paused for a moment only at the open door, then bounded softly to the ground. He stood for a short while sniffing the air to left and right, his tail lashing gently; then he padded off cautiously into the darkness.

Early the following morning Hercule burst into Mr. Bullitt's caravan with the news of the calamity. The circus magnate sat up in his bunk in his nightshirt and upbraided the lion tamer.

"He must be got back at once or it's the end of us. We're near enough to bankruptcy as it is, without losing our star performer. You hear me: he must be got back!"

The news spread with astonishing rapidity. When the police sergeant was informed that Leo the Man-Eating Lion was abroad, he turned white. He fumbled and dropped his keys as he hurried to open the station to issue revolvers to his men.

About noon a baker's van came hurtling into town at breakneck speed. The driver sprang from the van and shouted his news, that three miles out in the country he had seen a telegraph lineman marooned up a pole while Leo lay fast asleep at the base. The lineman had shouted piteously that he had been up the pole for two hours, that he was riddled with cramp and that he expected to fall off any moment.

A volunteer party with scythes and pitchforks crowded into the cars which the police quickly commandeered, and set out for the scene, but on their arrival they found nothing of Leo except some moulted hair. The lineman had to be taken from the telegraph pole by ladder. He was quite incapable of giving an articulate account of the affair and had to be assisted to walk by two men holding him under the armpits.

By early afternoon all the schoolmasters in the neighbourhood had got through on the phone to the Department of Education and obtained permission to close their schools.

"What I'm afraid of," said the lion tamer, "is that some of these yahoos of policemen will frighten Leo. A sudden shock at his age might have serious consequences. They're tearing round the countryside on bicycles with revolvers. You can never trust a policeman to act sensible. They're that wild when they get excited, they might even open fire and injure the poor, inoffensive animal. Oh, Mr. Bullitt, sir, Leo has been with us a long time now. You'll have to do something to save him. Can't you go to the sergeant and explain that he's the most harmless lion that ever walked on four paws? Honest, boss, that animal is innocent. I don't believe that in all his life he has even had a bad thought."

"Keep your mouth shut. He has been billed for years as an animal of most unexampled ferocity. Do you want to have me prosecuted for fraud? Anyway, if it's made public that he's nothing but a sissy, we might as well take his act out of the show, and where'd we be then? In the bankruptcy court, that's where."

That evening, when it was reported that Leo had been sighted on the railway line some miles outside the town, an engine driver refused to take his train out of the station. He was backed strongly by the fireman, who insisted that he had seen, in the films, lions springing unerringly from overhanging trees on to innocent passers-by.

"I don't think I'll be able to sleep," said the lion tamer sorrowfully, "when I think of that poor animal with nowhere to lay his head."

"I wish I could lay my hands on him," said Mr. Bullitt savagely. "He has the whole life of the county paralysed."

Mr. Bullitt's temper was not improved by the arrival the following morning of a farmer claiming compensation for the loss of a goat, shot dead during the night by a nervous policeman, whose only excuse was that it had failed to answer his challenge. . . .

Some five miles away in a small belt of trees Leo lay, his chin resting dejectedly on his great soft paws. Half an hour before, while sheltering in a ditch beside the road, he had been startled by the sudden appearance of a small boy on a bicycle. The unusual sight had nearly thrown Leo into convulsions. He had flung himself in desperation through the hedge and made off across the fields.

Now he lay motionless except for a slight twitching of the ears, wishing to Heaven that he was safe back in his cage. He lay there hour after hour until the urge of hunger became so strong that he could not bear to remain still any longer. He reared himself slowly to his feet, moaned plaintively, and started to wander disconsolately across the field.

As he was mooching through a gap, he saw something which brought him to a sudden halt. A few paces from where he stood, a fox terrier puppy was nuzzling a bone. When the puppy saw Leo, the eyes nearly popped out of his head. For one moment he gazed incredulously. Then he rolled over on his back, all his paws relaxed in token of surrender.

But Leo was not taking any chances: he had once been bitten by a furious Sealyham which had managed to worm its way between the bars of his cage, so his approach was wary. When he was near enough he put out a cautious paw and quickly flicked the bone in his own direction. In a moment he had it between his teeth and was running back the way he had come.

The puppy, apparently of opinion that his last hour had come, was lying on his back with his eyes closed; but when after a reasonable time he realized that nothing was happening to him, he ventured to open his eyes. Observing that the coast was clear, he ran off as fast as he could.

Meanwhile, Leo, when he adjudged that he was at a safe distance from the fellow animal which he had wronged, lay down to inspect his loot. It was a toothsome bone with shreds of meat still adhering to it, and his sniffing nose told him that it was packed with marrow inside. He wrapped a paw over the bone so as to keep it steady while he tried to get a grip on it with one side of his jaw.

But the bone was slippery, and the fact that he was wearing false teeth was an additional difficulty. He licked the bone several times, moved over on to one elbow and tried again. With his eyes half-closed and his nose wrinkled almost into a knot, he at last managed to get a firm grip. He exerted all the pressure of which his jaws were capable. There was an ominous crack, and several of his fangs fell out.

In the market square a trembling small boy leaned his bicycle against the town lamp-post and related to the horrified crowd how he had been chased for miles along the road by a lion.

"There's nothing else for it," said the sergeant, as he picked up the telephone. "I should have done it before. I'm going to call out the military."

The lion tamer had been drinking heavily, but this was the final blow. He took to his bunk and refused to get up.

"This is the end. They'll riddle the unfortunate animal with bullets."

"Yes," said his master bitterly, "and he's not even insured."

During the ensuing week, terror possessed the countryside. In outlying farms, behind doors heavily bolted and barred, farmers stood in the centres of their kitchens gripping pitchforks. Upstairs the women of the house tried to quieten the children, while all listened trembling to the soft pad of footsteps in the farmyard outside, the scratching sounds and the inevitable clucking and squawking from the poultry house.

In the morning when a farmer ventured to withdraw the bolts, it was to find that nothing remained of his hens but feathers scattered widely in the yard and on the neighbouring road.

"I wouldn't have believed that Leo was capable of it," said the lion tamer.

"I don't know what sort of government we have in this country. They can't even catch a wayward lion."

The authorities in fact were doing their best. A military cordon had been flung around the area, and six sharpshooters were on hand, but while there was a certain amount of banging at night, which gave the local people confidence, the only casualties so far had been among livestock.

On the following Saturday evening, Hercule, his face radiant, burst into Mr. Bullitt's caravan.

"Leo has been vindicated!"

Mr. Bullitt sprang from his bunk. "Have they captured him?"

"No, but his character has been cleared. Last night a farmer named Murphy saw that thieving poacher, Larry Hamill, creeping out of his yard with a sackful of dead hens. The poacher stood in the yard as bold as you please scattering feathers up in the air and in all directions, so as to put the blame on the unfortunate lion. Old Murphy peppered him with a shotgun from the window."

"That villainous twister! I knew he was no good. The dirty double-crosser! Have they arrested him?"

"No, he's in the county hospital with the doctors digging the shot out of him with knives."

The disclosure of the poacher's perfidy was followed by a revulsion of popular feeling in favour of the maligned Leo. It was realized that there was not a tittle of evidence that the lion had done any harm to man or beast; moreover, as he had not been seen for a week, the belief began to grow that he was either deceased or that he had moved out of the neighbourhood altogether.

The local people began to clamour for the withdrawal of the military sharpshooters, who were felt to be a greater danger than the lion. They became confirmed in this belief when one of the sharpshooters shot part of the roof off a poor man's cottage with a tommy gun one night, leaving the startled tenant and his wife exposed to the stars.

The military was withdrawn, and after a couple of nights undisturbed by random rifle fire, Leo ventured to put his head out of the boghole where he had gone to ground. He was very scraggy and emaciated. His bones were nearly protruding through his hide like the ribs of a broken umbrella.

There was no moon overhead, and no one knew how he found his way home back to the circus. Hunger may have sharpened his homing instinct, for he had subsisted for a week on an inadequate vegetable diet, mostly water cress and nettles. The lion tamer had hopefully left the door of the cage open, and one morning he was rewarded.

Leo was found squatting on his haunches inside, looking rather sheepish, his paws tar-stained, and his mane full of pieces of brier and bristling with burrs. He was a very sorry-looking lion, but he purred deep down in his throat and rubbed his scarred muzzle against Hercule as the lion tamer flung his arms around his neck. And Leo noted with satisfaction that, excited as the lion tamer was, he did not neglect to test every bar of the cage and lock and padlock the door before running to prepare a bumper meal and announce the return of the prodigal.

"Then Matthews tears up to the goal——and *WHAM* . . ."

THE HUMAN MACHINE

The Know-all

WISDOM is a plant of slow growth: and its flower is humility of mind. The more a man knows, the more he realizes how much he has still to learn.

The man who is mentally arrogant and cocksure, who is super-confident and "knows all the answers," is a sorry figure. He is a lonely, uncertain soul, who puts up a bluff to hide his ignorance.

He is impatient of discussion because he fears to have his uncertainties shown up. He has no real defence against reasoned argument.

There is a great difference between being knowledgeable and being wise:

Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much:
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

by ROFFE THOMPSON.

She burns up the miles! *by JANE ARMSTRONG*

Beatrice Shilling experiments with fuel that keeps rockets flying high and fast. Research work isn't slow—her way

"Supersonic" Shilling at Brooklands. She awoke in hospital after last race

A TINY WOMAN WITH a mop of blonde hair, who wears khaki slacks and a rusty jacket and drives a low-slung car she put together herself, is one of Britain's most closely guarded secrets.

At the Royal Aircraft Establishment in Farnborough, where she spends most of her time, she is known simply as "Miss Shilling of Super Sonics." There, screened by triple-bar security, she invents juices that will keep rockets and guided missiles in locomotion while men on the ground operate the push-buttons.

The public would never have heard of her if her name in the latest Honours List hadn't revealed that one of Britain's Backroom Boys wore a skirt.

Miss Shilling received the O.B.E.—just eight years after she invented a sensational gadget that kept the engines of fighter aircraft from cutting out in combat. Today the King's Viking has a carburettor she developed.

That Tomboy Look

I met her in a teashop outside the south gate of the R.A.E. She arrived in a racy-looking car whose roaring engine almost drowned out a Hawker aircraft taking off from the field across the road. A grease-stained trenchcoat over baggy trousers made her look more like a teen-aged tomboy than a scientist experimenting on push-button warfare.

Steel-rimmed spectacles and an absence of make-up give her face a pale, serious look. But when she smiles, superbly indifferent to a missing front tooth, Miss Shilling of Super Sonics is a tomboy again from the scuffed toes of her schoolgirl shoes to the grubby bandage on the forefinger of a chapped, workmanlike hand.

She talks about herself in an off-hand way and flatly refuses to discuss her research work. After a good deal of thought she will say: "I am working on combustion problems concerning the burning of any substance that might be good for aircraft fuel or for guided missiles."

Try Anything Once

She has an open mind about these experiments and is willing to gamble on anything from alcohol to old rubber boots if there's a chance they can be converted into fuel which will propel rockets faster than sound.

"I suppose it all started because I was lazy," says Miss Shilling.

When she was about seven years old in Dorking, she began to resent the fact that she had to pedal her bicycle twice as hard as two older and heftier sisters, Nora and Anne. "No matter how hard I pushed those pedals, I was always left behind." At the age of ten she hit on a way to overcome this handicap. It occurred to her that a motor cycle not only went faster than a bike but required almost no effort to run.

It took her four years to save the money, but when she was fourteen she slapped the cash on the counter and trundled the motor cycle home.

This was her introduction to the great love of her life: speed. *Speed?* Miss Shilling's eyes sparkle with interest, she leans forward in her chair and draws nervously on a cigarette while she tells how a few inventions of her own forced a later motor cycle to a speed of 106 miles an hour. She regards even her size—she's barely five feet—in a scientific light. "Less wind resistance. I can crouch down almost flat."

A kid of fourteen who decides to take a motor cycle apart just for the fun of reassembling it doesn't usually stop there. Neither did Beatrice Shilling. When she got her matric at school in Surbiton, she decided to become an electrical engineer. She had to borrow the money to put herself through Manchester University, repaying it later when she got her first job.

In retrospect, her college career seems to have been notable for two events. She began to gratify her love of speed by racing at Brooklands. She won twice with motor cycles adapted to her own ideas, reaching a speed of more than 100 miles an hour.

Scarred Her Knee

Her cycling career came to an abrupt end two years ago. "Here's why," she told me, and swung her leg from under the tea table, rolling up her trouser leg to show a badly scarred knee. "I admit I went over a pretty rough course. I simply woke up in a hospital. I chipped a bone in my neck, too. Haven't owned a machine since."

In her second year at college she scored another and more subtle triumph. Quite by accident she overcame half the opposition that her parents had displayed towards her career—opposition formidable enough to cramp the style of most girls.

Her mother's view of racing at Brooklands was just what you would imagine it to be. Her father, who has since died, felt there were few things in life more useless than a girl becoming an electrical engineer.

Then one day Beatrice fixed up a two-way switch for his bedside lamp. He was impressed. From then on, her father—happily snapping his light on at the door and off from his bed—was convinced that perhaps she had learned a trick or two at college that might justify the time and expense.

Her mother held out for another fifteen years. But last January, when her daughter received the O.B.E. for her aircraft invention, Mrs. Shilling dispatched a letter, both pleased and proud, which rather intimated that, if King George approved, then so did she.

Miss Shilling's career with the R.A.E. began in 1936 at the very bottom of the ladder. She brooded unhappily for six months writing descriptive handbooks on aircraft engines.

Men Were Rattled

She longed to move next door into the engine department but the appearance of a woman rattled the men. "I just kept nattering until I was shifted," she says cheerfully.

When war broke out Miss Shilling was plugging away quietly on aircraft carburettors and fuel systems. At the end of the war she was in charge of her section and a staff of twenty-five scientists. They had to solve all emergency problems of engine installations sent to the R.A.E. by British aeroplane factories.

Sometimes—but not often now—Miss Shilling tests or alters an engine part in the workship she has at her home in Ashley Road, Farnborough. She is married to George Naylor, who won the D.F.C. in the Royal Air Force. He is a big, blond sixfooter, who weighs fifteen stone. He's at the R.A.E., too—"a mathematician turned engineer" is his wife's description.

Naylor works on structures, computing by mathematics the degree of pressure an aircraft can withstand. When he was home on leave, the two collaborated on Miss Shilling's now famous "upside down" carburettor. It's now installed in the King's Viking and in Bristol and Napier piston engines.

Since the pressure of war research ended, the workshop has become a focal point of the Naylors' home life. Miss Shilling still has an undiminished passion for taking engines apart. And when she gets them reassembled it's no mere fluke that they usually have greater speed than before.

Although motor cycles no longer litter the back garden—and one suspects George Naylor puts his foot down about *that*—there are other channels to be explored.

At the moment the Naylors are devoting their spare time to a 1935 Lagonda they picked up somewhere as salvage. They are rebuilding it from scratch.

Miss Shilling also rejuvenated the low slung car that now carries the Naylors roaring through Farnborough's streets. She hasn't raced cars—yet. "I'd like to but I can't afford it."

In addition to all this, Beatrice Shilling keeps house. She has a low opinion of this branch of her endeavours, chiefly because Britain has not yet put the housewife on a scientific plane.

"Women in this country work too hard. Why isn't more done to streamline housework?" she demands. "Why do housewives have to put up with jugs that won't pour, with tin utensils that rust? There's always money to create efficiency in factories. Why don't women demand as much for their homes?"

Share the Housework

She goes through her own chores with a minimum of effort, however. "When we get home at night, George does the fires and peels the potatoes while I do the rest. Then I wash up while he dries." By splitting the housework they can squeeze out an extra hour in their workshop.

Weekends are rushed, too. On Saturday and Sunday mornings Miss Shilling dons flying togs and joins the Technical Training Flight at Farnborough where the R.A.F. is making pilots out of a few earthbound scientists. Miss Shilling has built extensions on the foot controls of the Harvard she hopes to fly.

Outside the teashop, after our talk, Beatrice Shilling stood on the pavement beside her car and watched the planes swooping and circling overhead. "I'll be up in that next week," she said, pointing. I asked her if it flew at any special speed.

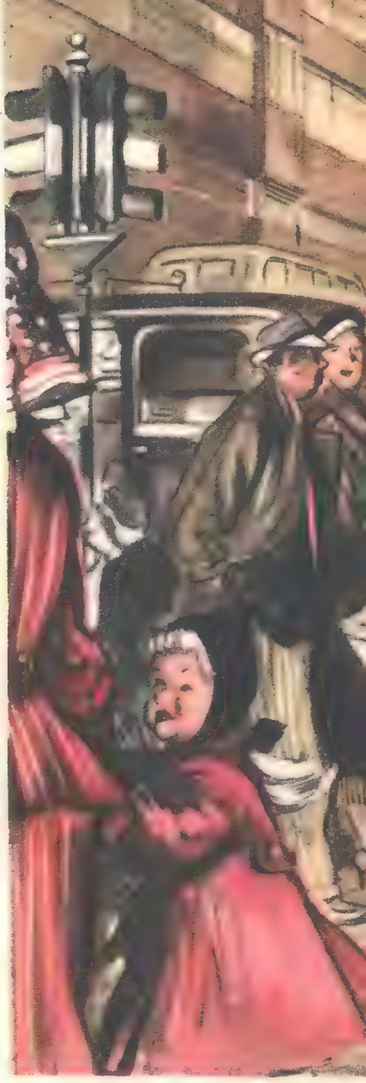
Miss Shilling shrugged. "Probably cruises around 250 miles an hour." Then she added in a flat voice: "You'd never know you were moving."

BLACK-HEADED GULL

by LAURENCE MEYNELL

ILLUSTRATED BY KOOLMAN

Clever birds, black-headed gulls. They let others do the stealing, then they steal the booty. Amusing, thought Mr. Dallengrant, who was a clever bird, too



A WELL-TO-DO LADY (her name was Mrs. Danvers, but the fact is not of much consequence to this story) was walking at three o'clock one fine October afternoon along the pleasantly crowded pavement of Oxford Street.

Mrs. Danvers was out for an afternoon's shopping, and she had just spent an agreeable twenty minutes looking round what is universally acknowledged to be the best of all book shops and book clubs — Lockwood's of Oxford Street, London.

At Lockwood's you may belong to the best library service in the world (Mrs. Danvers belonged to it) or you may browse round the most complete and satisfying collection of new books of all sorts, sizes, shapes and prices, to be found anywhere.

Mrs. Danvers looked such a prosperous, fur-clad, substantial sort of figure that you would have been astonished if you could have seen what happened to her heart when, a hundred yards maybe, from Lockwood's door somebody touched her lightly on the elbow and a soft, honeyed voice said:

"Excuse me, Madam."

At those mild words and that almost apologetic touch the heart of the prosperous Mrs. Danvers all but stopped beating. It turned to ice, and cold water ran in her veins for blood. She suddenly felt very sick indeed.

None of which you would have guessed as she turned to see what was wanted of her and who wanted it.

She saw a middle-aged man, bareheaded, with what looked like some sort of small sales book in his hand. He looked benevolent and distinguished.

"Do you want anything?" she inquired haughtily.

The man with the honeyed voice did want something. He was employed, he explained, in the shop department of Lockwood's; employed, he added casually and almost apologetically, as a detective (poor Mrs. Danvers's heart!); he had reason to think that one of the two books in Mrs. Danvers's arms had not been paid for.

"*Not paid for!*"

"No, Madam, not paid for. If I may reconstruct your actions for you: you first of all went up to the library to change your library book; then you came downstairs to the shop, wandered about from one counter to another picking up and putting down various volumes and finally, after a quick but, alas, Madam, inadequate look round to see if you were watched, you went through the time-honoured ritual of placing your library book for an instant on top of the book you wanted (I think it is the book on cathedrals) and then, lifting both up together, you went quickly outside."

"*Well!*"

The hatless man shook his head sadly. "No, Madam, not very well."

"Are you accusing me of theft?"

"Of shoplifting."

"I don't know how you dare! Why, my husband is a professional man with a big income."

"Alas, Madam, only too often that is the case."

"I can't believe that you are serious!"

"I may be wrong, Madam. In which case I suggest that you accompany me back to the shop and indicate the assistant who served you. We could then thrash the whole affair out in the manager's office."

But the man without the hat was not wrong. He knew that he was not wrong, and he knew that Mrs. Danvers knew it.

They stared at one another for thirty long seconds in silence, and then Mrs. Danvers was beaten. All the bluff and bluster left her suddenly.

"I—I—I'm frightfully sorry," she mumbled. "I don't know what made me do it, really I don't. Must we—I mean, isn't there *anything* we could do?"

The man without the hat considered. He knew his own particular business perfectly. The book which had been stolen was worth (if he remembered the price correctly) half a guinea; the woman looked more like a "fool thief" than a "hardened criminal thief."

He stretched out his hand and Mrs. Danvers tremblingly handed over the stolen book.

"It wasn't a very noble action," he said.

Mrs. Danvers shook her head.

"If you had the excuse of poverty or hunger," he went on, "it would be different. But you are well off, and if you were put in the dock on a charge your counsel would plead some expensive complaint like kleptomania for you. You would probably get off with a fine, which wouldn't really be a punishment for you at all. All things considered, I don't think you have much to be proud of."

"I am bitterly ashamed," Mrs. Danvers said, and at the moment it was true.

Very, very slightly the polite gentleman shrugged his shoulders. He had heard lots of women in similar circumstances claim that they were ashamed.

"May I suggest," his honeyed voice said, "that you think over your conduct and where it might have led you? And in the meantime you will understand, I am sure, that you will not be welcome in Lockwood's any more?"

"Thank you very much," Mrs. Danvers said humbly, and when he had gone she hailed a passing taxi immediately. She felt too sick and weak-legged to walk.

The man without a hat sauntered back along the pavement with the book on cathedrals tucked under one arm. He passed the entrance to Lockwood's, but did not enter; and a moment later he crossed the street and presently boarded a bus.

Twenty minutes later he was letting himself into his Bayswater flat.

Mr. Hamar Dallengrant had two living-rooms in his flat—one a small, square, brown, uninteresting compartment in which he ate; the other a rather fine, long, rectangular room where, with Polydore, his Siamese cat, he spent most of his leisure hours.

This room was lined with well-filled bookshelves and on these shelves, among other similar books, Mr. Dallengrant now put the book on cathedrals. Accompanied by Polydore, he then walked slowly round his shelves complimenting himself afresh not only on his remarkably fine collection of books but on the ease and artistry with which most of them had been obtained.

Halfway round the room there was a picture of a black-headed gull in action.

Hamar Dallengrant paused to consider this. He knew nothing whatsoever about birds, but when the picture dealer had expatiated on the merits of this picture and had explained its significance he had bought it.

The idea of the big black-capped bird making a feint attack on a common gull and frightening it into disgorging the food-booty it carried in its mouth, which the black-cap then snapped up and swallowed itself, amused Mr. Dallengrant. Foolish, frightened, ordinary gull; clever, daring black-cap!

Mr. Dallengrant resumed the appreciative tour of his shelves. There was much to be pleased about; but there were gaps. One book which he particularly wanted was a big, expensive one —*The Drawings and Notes of Leonardo da Vinci*. Mr. Dallengrant sighed. It pained him that he had not got the da Vinci. But he had not given up hope. Some day, someone might be foolish enough. . . .

IT had started innocently enough. One day in Lockwood's he had seen a well-dressed woman glance round quickly, slip a book into her smart little muff and stroll unconcernedly out.

He had been astonished and shocked. And he was so intrigued by the whole thing that he went out after her.

The woman turned and saw him. She recognized him as the man standing opposite her three minutes before in the shop and her nerve failed her. She pulled the book out of her muff, thrust it into his hands, gave a sort of strangled sob of "*I didn't mean to*" and ran, yes, literally ran, along the crowded pavement.

Mr. Dallengrant had stared after her, astonished. "*She must have thought I was a detective,*" slowly formed in his brain, and with it came the germ of his ingenious and highly profitable scheme.

After that Mr. Dallengrant became a well-known figure at Lockwood's. He was there most days and on every other day he made a purchase. It might be an expensive book (but this was not often), it might be a cheap one; but it was a genuine purchase, for Hamar Dallengrant loved books and spent quite a lot of money on them.

And at least once a week he found an opportunity to play the black-headed gull.

After that first occasion he began to look round and to watch carefully; and he became shocked, nothing less, at the depravity of his fellow humans. The dishonesty of them! The numbers of well-dressed, well-to-do women who were prepared to risk everything for a half-guinea, or a guinea, volume!

Hamar was distressed about it. He positively enjoyed reading them a salutary little lecture.

In the afternoon of the day following the Mrs. Danvers incident, Hamar Dallengrant was back in Lockwood's shop again. Twice he walked past the da Vinci and studied it. Thirty-five shillings was a lot of money even for a book-lover to pay; and there was always the chance of a gull.

He withdrew into his favourite point of vantage and looked round the shop. He had learnt by now that middle-aged women in fur coats were the most likely bets, and there were several "possibles" to keep an eye on.

But Mr. Dallengrant's eye was distracted, more than a little, by a lovely young woman in a tweed coat and skirt who held a big brown paper parcel in one hand and who was slowly walking past the poetry section. At forty-six

The girl was beautiful. Mr. Dallengrant went after his prey more swiftly than usual. "I've just followed you from the shop," he said

Hamar Dallengrant took rather more interest than was seemly in beautiful young women and he would have given a great deal for something to happen to give him an excuse for introducing himself to this one.

It did.

THAT very instant it happened. She passed the poetry section (leaving it reluctantly, it seemed) and approached the art shelves.

Casually, easily, unobtrusively, with the skill and address of a practised performer, the young girl rested her brown paper parcel for less than half a minute on top of the da Vinci so that she might lean forward and examine a book at the back of the shelves.

When she relaxed and moved away not only the brown paper parcel, but the da Vinci beneath it was in her small, beautifully shaped hands. Easily, unhurriedly, but without any undue delay, she made her way out of the shop door and into the concealing crowds of Oxford Street.

A dozen different emotions assailed Mr. Dallengrant. Such a complex thing is the human heart that one of them (and by no means the least) was dismay that so lovely a creature could be guilty of such sad immorality. But there were other emotions as well, and they took Mr. Dallengrant out after his prey rather more swiftly than usual.

He came up with her within a hundred yards.

"*My dear young lady——*"

Hamar was fond of addressing beautiful girls as "my dear young lady," just as he was fond of resting his hand, in a purely platonic way, of course, on their arms or shoulders.

"*My dear young lady——*"

She whipped round.

"My dear young lady, I have just followed you from the shop."

"*Oh.*"

"And may I suggest that you have acted very foolishly."

She looked at him silently for a moment and then said quietly: "I don't know what made me do it."

Hamar sighed. He felt that the intricacies of motive were too deep to go into at the moment. The occasion, it seemed, was ripe for talk of other things.

"I daresay we could find a café along here somewhere," he said. "Shall we go and have a cup of tea and a chat?"

An hour later they emerged from the teashop and parted. The girl was better off by a homily on the sadness of moral laxity and by Hamar's telephone number with an invitation to ring him up and seek his advice if she ever wanted help of any kind. Hamar, on the other hand, was enriched by an inward glow of self-righteousness—and by the da Vinci

He took it home at once and rearranged a whole shelf to give it an adequate and appropriate setting. He settled down to spend a very pleasant evening turning over the pages of his new treasure and occasionally letting his mind wander to the agreeable problem of Beauty in Moral Distress — and Beauty, moreover, who had his telephone number.

Quite early on in this agreeable evening Hamar was disturbed by his front door bell.

Normally he had very few callers and he went to see who might be there a little wonderingly. Wonder changed to excited pleasure when he opened the door and found the Young Lady of the da Vinci on the doorstep.

But excitement and pleasure were instantly qualified by caution. Clearly it would be dangerous to have her in the fire-warmed, book-lined sitting-room.

"My dear young lady," he murmured. "How delightful to see you again."

"I got your address out of the telephone book."

"We are all vulnerable there."

"And you did say I could come to you if I got into any sort of difficulty, didn't you?"

HAMAR opened the door wide. "Come in, please," he said to the girl.

She came in and stood expectantly in his dark little hall.

"Most unfortunately," Hamar explained fluently, "my sitting-room is being redecorated. I know you won't mind, my dear young lady, if I ask you into the dining-room—not, I'm afraid, aesthetically a very successful apartment, but never, believe me, more beautiful than at this moment."

The young lady smiled, a thing which she could do very attractively, and sat down.

"And now, my dear, you wanted to ask my help about something?"

"In a way—yes."

"You are in some sort of difficulty, perhaps?"

"I'm puzzled—I want to know something."

"If I can help you——"

"I think you can, Mr. Dallengrant."

The girl's voice suddenly lost a lot of the dreamy, tentative indecision which Hamar had been finding rather attractive. "I think you can. I'm curious to know what the da Vinci book looks like in your room and on your shelves. May I see it?"

Hamar was flabbergasted.

"My dear young lady," he gasped, "aren't you making some mistake?"

"No. None at all," that agreeable, but now very business-like voice assured him. "No mistake whatsoever. I've got Mr. Lockwood Senior waiting in a car outside."

"Mr. Lockwood!"

"Yes. He's interested, you know, in what gets stolen from his shop. Quite a lot does. It used to be just straightforward shoplifting — usually by silly women who ought to know better. But lately a rather ingenious complication has set in. It serves the women right, of course; they remain as foolish as ever. But I think you ought to be rather ashamed, Mr. Dallengrant, of the little lecture on morality which you no doubt read to them all."

Hamar might have blushed at that, except that he was busy turning a delicate pea-green with fear of all the disagreeable things he saw looming up in front of him.

"My dear young lady," was all he could say, in a far from convincing whisper. "It's all so abrupt, so sudden. I don't even know who you are."

The beautiful young girl laughed. "Oh, that's easy," she said. "I'm the detective employed by Lockwood's. The real detective. I've been watching you for some time."

The Russian as a Fighting Man

Continued from page 9

Primitive hordes or a mechanized robot? Russia's forces are a mixture of both, says Liddell Hart

tank—and that was the more frequent because their habit of giving very detailed instructions was unsuitable for radio communication.

Late in the war, however, enough American jeeps became available to provide a few for each tank battalion.

The quick support of tanks by infantry elements, and mobile combination between the two, was hindered by the lack of any armoured carriers or other cross-country vehicles. That meant waiting until infantry brigades or divisions could be brought up in lorries—and these might be stuck far behind when the sandy roads turned into mud.

But the Russians partly filled the gap by mounting infantrymen on the tanks and carrying them forward in that manner until the enemy's fire compelled them to dismount. This was typical of Russian improvisation.

The mass of the Army was much worse equipped. Even the volume of American supplies did not go far to make up the shortage of lorries, and most of them were needed to carry the infantry parts of the armoured corps, or for the rear services. The ordinary infantry division had to make do with horse transport—and little of that.

Dry Crusts, Raw Vegetables

What it meant was vividly explained to me by General von Manteuffel, who led many tank raids behind the Russian front:

"The advance of a Russian army is something that Westerners can't imagine. Behind the tank spearheads rolls on a vast horde, largely mounted on horses. The soldier carries a sack on his back, with dry crusts of bread and raw vegetables collected on the march from the fields and villages. The horses eat the straw from the house roofs—they get very little else. The Russians are accustomed to carry on for as long as three weeks in this primitive way, when advancing. You can't stop them, like an ordinary army, by cutting their communications, for you rarely find any supply columns to strike."

The tactical standard of the ordinary divisions was not high, and in many cases rather poor. Their handling, by the commanders, was often unskilful and unimaginative, while reckless of losses.

The view of their opponents was expressed in the comment that one of the German Army commanders made to me: "The Russians were always very bull-headed in their offensive methods, repeating their attacks again and again. This was because their leaders lived in fear of being considered lacking in determination if they broke off their attacks."

The Germans many times overheard wireless orders that threatened commanders with the direst penalties if they hesitated to launch their troops into a renewed assault. The troops in their turn were pushed forward with the threat of being shot in the back if they faltered.

Such bull-headed attacks failed far more often than they succeeded, while piling up the losses—into millions. But they had a psychological effect on the defender even where they failed. They gave him the feeling that no matter how many waves he shot down, more would come on. That "got him down." It made him more susceptible to the flank threat that arose whenever the Russian armoured spearheads pierced some weak point in his extended line.

But it would be a mistake to assume that fear was the main cause of the Russians' amazing fortitude and disregard for losses. Besides it there was fanaticism for a Communist idea, which Soviet indoctrination had grafted on to a deep-rooted patriotism. And beyond that there was a fatalism natural to the Slav-Asiatic character of the people, but given a more automaton-like effect by the new combination of a mechanistic age with a deterministic view of human life.

Hard to Stampede Them

It is more difficult for an opponent to make an impression on Russian troops, either by shock or surprise, than on those of any other nation.

This diminishes his chances of stampeding them by air attack or by a threat to their flanks—to which most armies are acutely sensitive. On the other hand, it gives him more chance of getting right round their flanks before they have realized the danger, and cutting them off; though it may still prove very hard to make them surrender even when their situation is hopeless.

Here we may find the reason why the Germans took such an immense total of prisoners in their great pincer manoeuvres, yet also had to pay a heavy price themselves, in life and delay, before they could actually put the encircled Russians "in the bag."

It is significant that the younger German soldiers who were in the fighting line tend to be even more emphatic in their testimony to Russian toughness than the higher generals who planned these vast encirclements—for it was the younger men who had to "finish the job." Even so, it was not so hard to force the surrender of such large masses as it was to overcome the small parties that were cut off and surrounded in the course of a battle. These commonly held out until they were all killed or crippled.

The "unimpressionability" of the Russians, as well as their exceptional capacity to carry on without proper supplies, must be heeded when considering the claims made for air power as the decisive answer to the Russian threat.

There is an influential body of expert opinion in the West, especially in England, which argues that the best way to stop a Russian invasion is to have a great air force, ready to attack its lines of supply, rather than a big army.

Advocating the creation of an allied force of 450 air squadrons, Lord Templewood recently declared that with a "force of this kind I am convinced that the Allies could stop and disorganize any attempted advance across the Continent." He was supported by Lords Trenchard and Portal, the two greatest Chiefs of the Air Staff.

Their views were based on experience of the Western campaign in 1944-45. But such assurance looks dubious in the light of evidence from the Eastern front.

From this it is clear that the Russians are better able than any Western army to advance in face of a strong opposing air force, because of their army's lesser dependence on supply, and their troops' greater ability to do without what other armies regard as necessities.

Moreover, when the German Army in France suffered paralysis—though not complete paralysis—under air attack, the German Air Force had already been driven out of the sky, as a result of a prolonged struggle. If the Red Army started to advance, and the Allied Air Forces tried to stop it, they would have to reckon on meeting strong interference from the Red Air Force, in the first—and vital—phase at least.

How Good Are Their Mechanics?

Lord Trenchard discounted such interference by arguing that while the Russians might have plenty of machines, and could make good ones, they were inefficient in operating and maintaining them. He went on to declare that the same applied to mechanical vehicles on the ground. That represents a very prevalent view in the West.

Is it a safe assumption?

Germans who fought on the Eastern front say that the Russians had improved greatly in mechanical sense and skill by 1944-45 compared with 1941. The bigger repairs were not carried out as quickly as in the German Army, but their normal maintenance service was good, and they had plenty of well-trained mechanics.

In fact German tank officers told me that, in the later part of the war, their own maintenance companies were manned almost entirely by Russians, and these proved as good as their own men. From this, it seems that we may be in danger of clinging, and pinning our hopes, to an out-of-date idea.

There is a danger, also, in the tendency to dwell on the Red Army as one of quantity without quality, or of uniformly low quality, and to talk as if the problem was that of stopping such a mass-produced army. Trenchard implied this when declaring: "I cannot believe that 500,000, 1,000,000 or even 2,000,000 men could advance without being stopped by the power of the Royal Air Force, backed by the power of the American Air Force."

In reality, the initial problem is that of stopping a much smaller but skilled force of mechanized spearheads.

In the later stages of the Eastern front campaign, it was these fast-moving spearheads which carried out the decisive penetrations, while the mass army walked on behind. It may be more of a problem to stop 200,000 of such troops than to stop the 2,000,000 mass.

Air Force Alone Couldn't Save Us

To meet that problem a large air force is not enough. While a large army with little air support would be an even less safe insurance, there is need for a fair-sized land force of a highly mobile kind to check the Russian spearheads that might infiltrate in face of air attack. The Western allies are at present far from possessing that minimum insurance on the ground. When it is attained, then it may be wise to put the preponderant effort into developing air strength—to check the mobilized masses of Russia on their long walk to the West.

Those masses *are* backward, in skill and equipment, by Western standards. But the leaven is increasing, and rising in both skill and equipment.

The postwar disbandment of many divisions and the reduction of the total numbers under arms has made it possible to give a higher scale of modern equipment to those that remain, especially the spearhead divisions. With the aid of rebuilt factories and new centres of production in the satellite and occupied countries it has become possible to improve the quality as well as the scale of mechanized equipment.

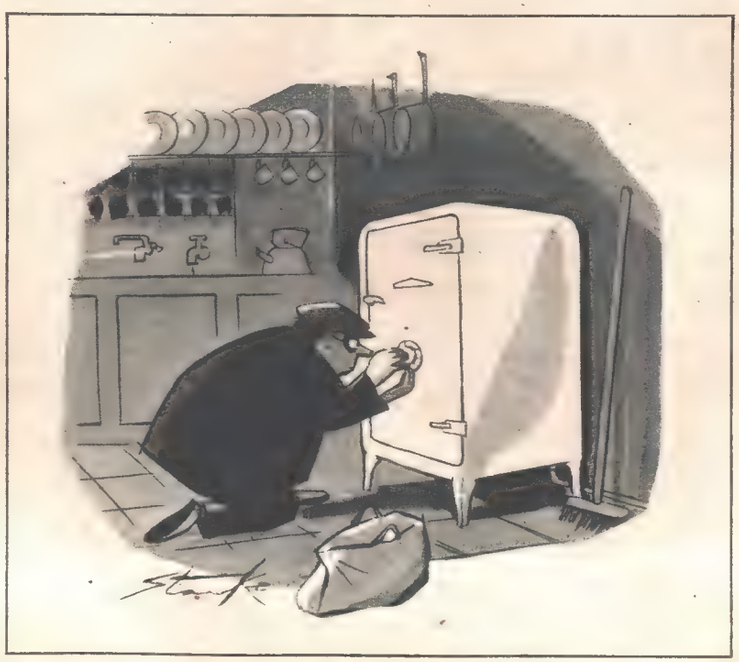
The proportion of long-service professional soldiers in the peacetime army is very high—American estimates put it at one out of every three men now serving—and that helps to form spearhead divisions from men of high skill and training.

In sum, Russia's forces present, and represent, a collection of contrasts that confuses the Western observer who tries to place them as a whole in a specific grade. They defy such classification—like Russia itself.

So many people ask: "What is the truth about Russia?" The extreme variation of the attempted answers shows the impossibility of a definite one. There was deeper understanding in the man who, from closer experience, replied: "Everything you hear about Russia is true. All the good things you hear are true and all the bad things are true."

Likewise with Russia's forces, these have the characteristics both of the primitive hordes and of the mechanized robot. While some parts show one characteristic more than the other, all parts show traces of both.

Thus it comes about that a "mechanistic" human tendency towards centralized rigidity is still accompanied by a remarkable knack of improvisation, while on the other hand the flexibility that the mechanized vehicle itself offers is restricted by old habits of pedestrian action, even where the new régime favours a dynamic mobility.



JOHN BULL April 2 1949

HIS HENS LAY BY NUMBERS

by HARRY HOPKINS

The modern hen is an egg-producing robot. It gets artificial sun, feeds by conveyer belt, and works to a four-year plan

An egg rolls from the "factory." In a prewar year we ate 153 apiece

EVERY NIGHT NOW, around six o'clock, the "Chicks Express" steams out of the little Yorkshire town of Mytholmroyd and down the Calder Valley, pulling its chirruping vanloads of day-old chicks, high-stacked, twenty-five to each cornerless cardboard box.

They are on their way to farms and back gardens all over the land, new recruits to a rapidly expanding poultry army which last year grew by half a million. Britain once again has as many fowls as people.

In the opening years of the century there was a bitter weavers' strike in the Calder Valley. "Out" over a year, the men were on their beam ends. Among them was an eighteen-year-old lad named Edgar Thornber—looking around for a way to put a little money in his pocket again.

He got a dozen orange boxes, filled them with broody hens, sitting clutches of eggs. He reckoned that local poultry men would be glad to be relieved of the troublesome business of hatching eggs. He was correct. At a few coppers each the chicks sold quickly.

The piles of orange boxes grew until there were three hundred of them, stacked high around the backyard wall and along the path up to the cottage. When the looms began to work again young Thornber did not go back to the mill. He had a business now.

He bought one of the first primitive incubators, installed it in his bedroom so as to be able to watch it in the night. He was changing a hobby into an industry.

Time Clocks, Signal Lights

Today, as Cyril Thornber succeeds his father, that transformation is complete. With air-conditioning cowls jutting from their roofs, Thornber's hatching and rearing sheds march rank after rank with the woollen mills. Two hundred people work here—it is one of Mytholmroyd's main industries. Over five million eggs will go into the incubators this year, drawn from two hundred supplying farms. And there are seventy or eighty other hatcheries in the valley.

It is a highly mechanized industry: time clocks, rows of coloured signal lights, the latest incubators, each holding 28,000 eggs, a clock set to turn eggs automatically. If an incubator's temperature drops to danger point a bell rings in the manager's house.

Fluffy yellow chicks flow from the incubator trays as smoothly as cars from a mass-production line. The chirruping yellow stream flows to the tables where nine "sexers," sitting under focused lights, separate males from females, six hundred an hour.

One branch of the production line flows to the "packers and cullers" (any seedy chick destroyed at sight); another is wheeled off to the endless rows of battery cages, five-storey flat-blocks where the chicks, eighty to a floor, spend the next four weeks under thermostatically controlled heating.

But it is in the laying battery that the industrialization of the hen reaches its perfect conclusion. Your first glance inside a battery house is rather like that long shot of the main hall in Sing-Sing. Seventeen thousand hens packed in a space twenty yards square. The noise they made as they thrust quizzing heads out of the bars of their cells was, I thought, preoccupied rather than unhappy.

Preoccupied, perhaps, by the steady advance of the electrically-powered food-and-water holder which slides slowly to and fro in front of the cages, giving each hen a couple of minutes each trip to take in its quota.

Egg is Bustled Off

Each hen has her own all-wire apartment with just enough room to turn round. She stands on a sloping wire grille. As she lays an egg it rolls down the grille and on to a wire channel outside which runs the length of the stack. The "floor" under the grille is flexible, rubberized and continuous. Press a button at the end of the stack and it starts to rotate. A rotating brush and scraper at the end of the stack clean it off. This way, one man can look after three thousand hens. His main job is picking up eggs. He also marks up the score on the daily record sheet fixed outside each cage. Thus, a slacking hen's guilt is immediately exposed.

The pullets enter the battery a few weeks before they are due to start laying for the first time. And you do not have to wait for spring for them to attain their egg production peak. The battery manager can turn on spring with a flick of the heating-and-lighting switch.

The first sight of the big laying battery is apt to stir some strange questioning in the ordinary human breast. It is hardly to be wondered at that, when the first batteries were installed years ago, it was often done in secret. Even today controversy flares up intermittently.

Protested Essex Councillor A. L. Shepherd recently: "These poor birds never know the joy of rooting or scratching for a worm. They live empty lives. . . ." The Essex Education Committee heard him with sympathy and, by a majority of one, banned batteries from their Colleges of Agriculture.

Battery men retort with some cogency that, since we cannot know what the hen thinks about it, we can judge only by physical effects. Would hens lay more eggs, put on flesh, if they were suffering? Says Ben Stansfield, Thornber chief: "If you let a hen out of a battery cage, she goes back again. And, anyway, is it so much worse than men having to stand at machines in factories day after day, all their lives?"

Many poultrymen believe that, if feeding restrictions were relaxed, the battery system would sweep the field.

Feeding restrictions, however, are not likely to be relaxed. Millions of fowls are still nourished on "Tottenham Pudding" — town waste processed on a system first used at Tottenham. For this reason, the Ministry of Agriculture's policy is to develop poultry, not as a specialized industry, but as a factor in the economy of general farms which, in fact, still have seventy-five per cent of Britain's fowl population.

Flash-in-the-Pan Birds

The Ministry's Four Year Plan calls for twenty more eggs per bird by 1952/53. With batteries out, how is that to be done?

Breeders originally took the Cochin fowl from China, the Leghorn from the Mediterranean, the Rhode Island Red from America and completed the long process of transformation from scraggy tree-top fowl to a compact egg-producing mechanism. They turned out Stakhanovite hens with spectacular egg output.

Today experts believe they were on the wrong track. They exaggerated the importance of the brilliant—but often isolated—individual. The modern way is to look for the bird that not only lays well but also has the ability to transmit that characteristic.

This is the principle behind the Ministry of Agriculture's Stock Improvement Plan, which sets up a network of "accredited breeders" where "progeny testing" is carried on. Under this, a cock bird is not entered on the special breeding stock register unless a random sample of no less than forty of his progeny, from six different hens, yield over a forty-nine-week period a "hen-housed" average of 180 eggs not less than two ounces each. This is more than twice the national average.

As a result of such stock improvement the average egg yield at Mytholmroyd has gone up by thirty to forty eggs a year. "And," says Cyril Thornber, "it can still go up another thirty or forty."

Multiply that through the farms of Britain, as the Ministry plan aims to do, and the egg ration could be ended without either more food or more hens.

In a prewar year we ate on the average 153 eggs apiece. By 1944 it had fallen to thirty. Now the figure is on the way up again. Last year it was seventy. This year the Ministry of Food forecasts a hundred. The egg is on the way back to the British breakfast plate.

"Twenty-four, healthy, and would dearly love another child": Mrs. Beryl Davies with husband and daughter

"Control Commission is hampering German recovery": German-born Mrs. I. Fletcher

FREE SPEECH

Emigrants should be told Australian housing facts
Husband's wages: how much ought wives to expect?
How civilians look at Servicemen—by a conscript

INTENDING MIGRANTS FROM Britain should be told that the housing situation here is just as bad as in the U.K. Australian families are living in tents, garages, etc.

Australians who nominate British immigrants must be able to offer them accommodation for an indefinite period. As the majority of Australian houses have only two bedrooms, this almost eliminates the possibility of a large family successfully migrating.—MRS. LILIAN WOOLDRIDGE, 1056 Albany Highway, East Victoria Park, Western Australia.

£10 a Week

MY HUSBAND EARNS £10 a week. How much of this should I reasonably expect? At present he gives me £5, with which I pay 10s. rent, fuel bills, housekeeping expenses, and for clothes for myself and the two children, with the exception of heavy winter coats.

My husband says I should feel well off, as many men do not earn £5 a week in all.—HOUSEWIFE, Cornwall. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Everybody's Darlings, Once

I WAS CONSCRIPTED INTO the Army in September, 1947, straight from school. I dislike the life intensely, but what hurts most is the attitude of civilians.

During the war Servicemen were everybody's darlings. Now, they are considered scruffy, degraded and a permanent nuisance. People should realize that most Servicemen are just youthful civilians forced temporarily into uniform. —BOMBARDIER, Essex. (Full name and address enclosed).

Atomic Fish?

ATOMIC TESTS WITH gamma rays are to take place off the south coast, and the public has been assured that animals will not be used and that there will be no danger to human beings. But what about the fish?

A few months ago it was reported that fish in the vicinity of Bikini had become radio-active and were infecting other fish far from their normal grounds. Isn't this endangering human beings who may unwittingly eat the fish? — MRS. MARY MCLEAN, 20 Roderick Drive, Sandhaven, Fraserburgh.

"Stupidity" in Germany

THE GERMAN WIFE of a Briton, I heartily agree with what J. H. Price had to say in his letter headed "Extravagance in Germany" ("Free Speech," March 12). The Control Commission is an utterly useless authority that hampers German recovery.

Before marrying, I was secretary in the Armament and Machine Tool Survey Department of the Military Government. One example of administrative stupidity: several master joiners who had no machinery to produce essential furniture for blitzed families were given permission by one department to use carpentry machines which were rotting in an old shed.

Soon after came a sharp rebuke from the superior department miles away. The machines had to be returned to the shed at once. It was difficult to explain why to the master joiners, and even worse to see the machines uselessly rot away into scrap the next winter.—MRS. INGEBORG FLETCHER, 13 Neville Gardens, Dagenham, Essex.

How an Official Lives

AN OFFICIAL IN THE Control Commission in Germany, I have a salary of £12 a week and a five-roomed flat which costs me £8 10s. a month. My wife and I have a ration of 190 cigarettes a week between us.

The fare for leave in Britain is £23 return — which means we can't afford to run a car if we want to spend leaves at home. Is this extravagant living?—K. G., Germany. (Full name and address enclosed.)

Idea for Travel Agencies

IN AN OPEN COMPETITION sponsored by a Swiss agency, I have recently won a free holiday in Switzerland for writing a prize essay on "What I Have Heard of Switzerland." I was one of a hundred winners out of 3,650 competitors, and my holiday is to be spent during August.

The competition itself naturally aroused my interest in Switzerland. Why don't British agencies run a similar scheme? It should cost very little and would attract many non-prizewinners to our own beautiful country. — MISS FLORENCE TOUT, 41 Edward Street, Westbury, Wilts.

Holiday Camp Age-groups

ARE THE OVER-FORTIES being crowded out of everything? A married man of forty-four, I applied recently for a holiday camp prospectus. Booking was being organized in age groups.

Previous members could apply in January, non-members under forty in February, and the over-forties (if any bookings were still available) in March. I got the impression that the management was treating the unfortunate over-forties as though they didn't need or deserve a holiday. — G. FORD, 34 Buxton Road, Chaddesdon, Derby.

Home First, then Family

AS THE MOTHER OF A daughter aged two, I was amazed to read in Dr. Harvey Graham's article, "Baby's Fine But He Needs a Brother" (JOHN BULL, March 29), that he would "advise any young couple to start the family first and sort out housing problems later."

I am twenty-four, healthy, and would dearly love another child. But until we get something better than two rooms to live in, I cannot and will not rear a larger family. — MRS. BERYL DAVIES, Cliff House, Beeding, Steyning, Sussex.

Life in One Room

WE HAVE ONE ROOM in which I, my wife and two young children eat, sleep, store food, cook and wash. When I am on night shift, I have to try to sleep amid all the domestic activity. Both my wife and I are worried to distraction. Would Dr. Harvey Graham suggest this is the right background for a young family?—R. DOWNES, 7 Oakfield Road, Erdington, Birmingham, 24.

Never Sold a Coupon

CLOTHES RATIONING never worried me, and now that it is finished there are still several hundred coupons unused in my family's five books. I am proud to think that I never stooped so low as to sell a single one.—MRS. A. LANGFORD, 142 Yew Tree Road, Aston, Birmingham, 6.

Checking Coast Erosion . . .

I AGREE WITH MRS. D. NICHOLAS about coast erosion ("Free Speech," March 5). Between Bridlington and Hull three yards of coast land disappear into the sea every year. It is one of those things that everyone vaguely deplores, without taking any action. The Government must do something—and quickly. A. L. OLDFIELD, 25 Stockton Lane, York.

. . . Let Jailbirds Help

HUNDREDS OF SCALLYWAGS are languishing in prisons at public expense. Let them earn their keep by building sea walls and help prevent the country being washed away. If it can be done in Holland it can be done here.—F. A. WRIGHT, 61 Burgoyne Road, London, N.4.

Subtle Difference

THE FOLLOWING APPEARS on the address side of the card used for applying for Service stars and medals:

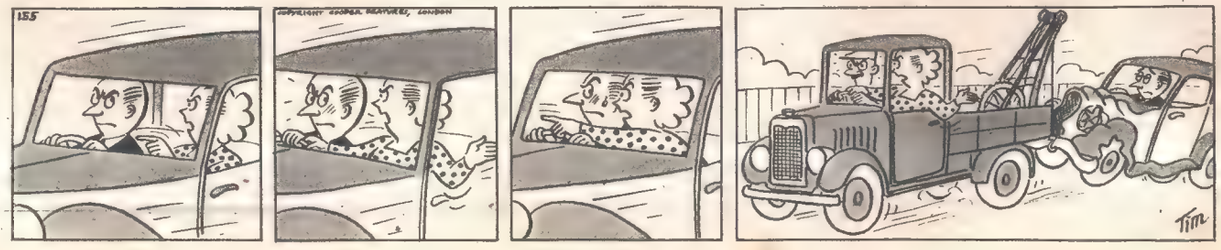
(1) "Officers (except H.G.). Add to the partly printed address: The War Office, Whitehall, S.W.1.

(2) "Other Ranks (and all ranks H.G.). Add to the partly printed address: The War Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.1."—H. R. CROFT, 128 Waterpark Road, Prenton, Birkenhead.

Because of space shortage only a limited selection of the many readers' letters submitted can be printed. If your views are squeezed out, it does not mean that they have been overlooked by the Editor. For every letter used, John Bull pays one guinea. Letters should be marked "Free Speech" and carry the full name and address of sender for publication.

OH, JOHNNY!

by TIM



TEST TOUR SCOREBOARD

by JOHN ARLOTT

An expert who followed our team in South Africa sums up the tour and the effects it may have in the season ahead

During the third Test at Capetown, Mann, Compton, Hutton and Washbrook (left to right) take time off to study the football results from home. Yates Wilson, present at the match, painted this specially for John Bull

SOME OF THE TRIUMPHS of the 1948-49 M.C.C. tour in South Africa can be seen immediately, and they read impressively. There has been the side's long unbeaten run and England's first overseas Test victory for ten years; there has been the Hutton - Washbrook record opening partnership; attendance records have been smashed all through South Africa and Rhodesia.

Finally there has been the team's great social success.

After the defeats of our other post-war touring sides—Hammond's team in Australia and Allen's in the West Indies—these results are heartening. The wise cricketer, however, will remember that South African cricket is still in the process of rebuilding after the war. A touring side in South Africa three or four years hence will not have so easy a passage.

Matches won, runs scored, wickets taken and cash earned do not tell the whole story of a touring side's effect on the cricket of the country visited. Nor are mere statistics a complete guide to the effect the tour may have on the domestic cricket to which the players return.

The Strain of It

There is a balance, which the critic can only grope for, between the loss of subsequent cricket power through the strains and nervous exhaustion of a tour, on the one hand, and the gain through increased experience and confidence on the other.

The strains of an overseas tour such as that of South Africa are considerable—far more so than many English cricket followers, envying the party its South African summer, appear to believe.

If one is merely on a holiday, the problems of acclimatization and reorientation are relatively simple: the holiday tourist may at once leave a district which he finds uncongenial, or take to his bed for three or four days. But for a job requiring such delicate adjustment as a Test innings, a long spell of bowling or a day's wicket-keeping, the difference between the rarified atmosphere of Johannesburg and the steamy-blanket air of Durban is not easily to be overcome in twenty-four hours.

A train journey of two days and nights in first-class travelling conditions is not normally a hardship, but it is hardly the best preparation for muscles which may be required to propel the body at maximum speed four hours after leaving the train. The rich foods and fruits of South Africa—granadillas, paw-paw, venison, mangoes, eggs, meat and bacon in profusion—are a delight to the newcomer from Britain. But, in their effect upon the digestion and, thence, upon eye and bodily movement they can lose a wicket or runs.

It is foolish to deny the influence of environment on any man's work. The English county cricketer is used to his evenings at home during half his year's matches, and it is at home that he finds real relaxation.

On tour he is a popular figure, fêted by one town after another. To English expatriates he is a symbol of a home county, a bearer of tidings as to "how things are at home." Thus a fresh store of nervous energy is tapped and drained.

The fact that these new friends are kindness personified, generous, hospitable, even flattering, makes no difference; the drain on the player's nervous vitality is the same. His retreat is a hotel bedroom, ever-changing in every detail except the trunks which are the touring player's home.

More than one of George Mann's players were tired men by the time they flew from Durban to the fifth Test at Port Elizabeth. Many of them will inevitably be feeling a little stale as they walk on to the field at Lord's or the Oval or Headingley when the county cricket season starts.

Alec Bedser, for instance, often bowled with superhuman energy in immense heat. He bowled to the limit of even his mighty physique and, being Alec Bedser, he was straining all the time for a wicket. The other pace-bowler, Gladwin, also laboured mightily but possibly more economically.

July Will Show

The 1946-47 tour of Australia certainly reduced Bedser's effectiveness in England in 1947. July will show whether his greater experience of three-day cricket has now given him stamina to carry on after a tour at full pressure. Certainly there is a danger that Bedser, like Maurice Tate before him, being the sharpest pace-weapon at the disposal of English captains and, again like Tate, a willing worker, will be worn out fairly early.

The strain upon Dennis Compton has already been reflected in some loss of form during the second half of the tour itself.

The experience of Mann's team should call attention to possible improvements in the conditions of later English teams touring South Africa. Even towards the end of this tour, air travel was being substituted for the long rail journeys. If all these journeys—averaging 400 miles from match to match—could be made by air, the side could play an extra match, with resultant financial gain, and yet enjoy more static rest periods.

Again, if the pattern of the Australian tours could be followed, the players and their play would benefit. On Australian tours the team usually stays at each centre for two to three weeks, playing, perhaps, the local state team, a semi-representative eleven and then a Test match. Thus the players are acclimatized, accustomed to the local wicket and generally settled in before they play the Test.

In South Africa the desire to draw Test match crowds from the large numbers of people free on Dingaan's Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day—all public holidays coming in a period of less than three weeks—caused the Tests

to be arranged close in time but distant in venue.

On the credit side, South Africa has seen her cricketing weaknesses clearly exposed at least in time to take thought before the visit of the 1949-50 Australians to South Africa. A number of young cricketers who have made promising appearances against the M.C.C. will be marked down for development.

For England, several young cricketers, no more than promising when they left England, have proved themselves against the best opposition the tour could offer. Cliff Gladwin of Derbyshire, "Roley" Jenkins of Worcester, Allan Watkins of Glamorgan, could almost be seen growing up as Test cricketers during the tour.

Gladwin, from being a bowler who was too often negative, has developed a varied technique and a new degree of attack which will be apparent on the more sympathetic English wickets. As his room-mate, Gladwin was given Jenkins, who was also making his first tour. Together they overcame the strangeness of a fresh country and fresh team-mates and, each a psychological stimulus to the other, became two of the major successes of the tour.

Jenkins had bowled relatively little in his Worcestershire county side. Given a mountain of work to do on this tour, he revelled in spinning the ball and in throwing it up to class batsmen, defying them to attack his leg-breaks and googlies. He took a huge crop of wickets early in the tour and vital wickets in Test matches. English cricket of 1949 will see a new Jenkins, confident in the exercise of his craft.

Sensational Catch

Allan Watkins was not a popular choice with the critics when he was picked for the last Test against Bradman's Australians in 1948. His fielding and his batting promise took him into the first Test in South Africa. There he made a sensational and vital catch to dismiss Dudley Nourse and played a perfect vignette of a defensive innings when the wicket was at its most difficult. Another good innings at Capetown and then a century in the fourth Test—and he had become a new batsman by comparison with the player we knew in England.

Gone was the old shaky start which once brought his friends' hearts into their mouths. Gone, too, the old hesitancy in attack. On the basis of his always accomplished footwork, the South African tour saw him develop a confident early defence until he was seeing the ball, and then powerful but judicious and well-placed scoring shots.

Temperamentally, too, he advanced—from the young man who came to the Oval Test of 1948, never before having played first-class cricket except in the Glamorgan county eleven, to a self-reliant player with six Tests in two continents to his credit.

Some of the good results of the tour may never be fully effective. Charles Palmer, an elegant and sound bat, a thoughtful bowler and a brilliant fieldsman, proved himself an excellent cricketer. The tour emphasized the loss English cricket suffers through his inability, as a job-tied amateur, to play more than a few matches in each season.

"Billy" Griffith, the vice-captain, underlined his great gifts as a leader of men, gifts which were apparent during his war service with the glider units and again on the West Indies tour. Here is the sympathetic type of administrator English cricket has so long needed, and a player who always gives of his best.

English and South African cricket will both reap the benefits of this tour in its cricketing aspects. Humanity itself, too, must be the richer for the friendships and selfless kindnesses which the party gave and received, and which will be long remembered on both sides.

WHEN A COUPLE DISAGREE

by HERBERT HODGE

If only I'd known at eighteen what I now know about women

PERHAPS I OUGHT NOT to risk writing this in a week that contains All Fool's Day — but a reader has asked for it, so here goes. He wants advice on a problem that, to my mind, is the most difficult of all the problems of marriage. When two lovers completely disagree about a certain course of action, who ought to give way—the man or the woman?

In this particular case, their disagreement happens to be about emigration. But it might just as well be about any one of a dozen things that would vitally affect their whole life together.

In this case, too, they are not yet married. So they can still agree to disagree—and part. But they don't want to part. They want to marry. Yet the man is firmly set on living in one of the Dominions, while the girl is equally determined to stay in Britain.

The man writes: "My knowledge of the intricacies of a woman's mind is very limited; and this is a problem I can't solve. What would *you* do?"

Well, I can't claim any special knowledge of a woman's mind, beyond what one man can observe in a short lifetime. But my own observations lead me to believe that hardly any woman would respect a man who knuckled under on such a vital matter as this.

So I know what *I'd* do. If I'd made up my mind to emigrate, I'd emigrate. If my girl wanted to be my wife, she'd follow me. If she didn't follow me, she wouldn't be the girl I wanted as my wife—no matter how much I loved her.

Man is the Leader

There *are* husbands, of course, who are entirely dominated by their wives. And, for all I know, they may be happy husbands. But I don't think that's a normal relationship between a man and a woman.

In nature, man is the leader, the pioneer; and woman is the home-maker. If a woman isn't prepared to follow a man and make a home for him wherever he chooses to settle—then, although she may be a wonderful sweetheart, I don't think she's fit to be his wife.

After all, somebody's got to have the last word. Somebody's got to make the final decision. And if, after talking it over for days and weeks you still can't agree, I think it's the woman's part to give way to the man.

If he comes unstuck she can always say, "I told you so." But if she's a good wife she won't. Instead of saying, "You made a mistake," she'll say, "*We* made a mistake"—that "we" marking the fact that they are truly married.

Not that I'm trying to give advice to wives. I know my place as a husband too well to attempt any such thing.

Nor am I suggesting that a wife should always submit to her husband. No man respects a woman who always gives way to him—any more than a woman respects a man who always gives way to her. There's a delicate balance in this relationship between husband and wife, a balance that a married couple have to work out for themselves.

Compromise—If You Can

When the question disagreed about is one that solely concerns the woman, I thing the man should give way—and when it solely concerns the man, the woman should give way. The utmost personal freedom *within* the marriage is my ideal. Where the matter vitally concerns them both, it's obviously a question for compromise—if compromise is possible.

But where no compromise is possible—as in this question of emigration—then I think the wife should follow the husband's lead. I think it's the right and natural thing to do.

My correspondent says he's sure I must have made mistakes with my own sex problems, and that he hopes to profit by what I've learned from those mistakes. Well, I can assure him that what I've written here I've learned mainly by the process of trial and error. If only I'd known at eighteen what I think I know now, what a success with women I might have been!

But even at eighteen I knew enough to know instinctively that I must never allow a woman to deflect me from my chosen path. If a girl didn't want to lead my kind of life she wasn't the girl for me.

You can call that male arrogance or male selfishness if you like. And you may be right. All I know for certain is that I've never been able to love a woman long if I couldn't think of her as a willing comrade in life's adventure.

That's why I suggest to this young man that he should stick to his decision about emigrating—whether his girl agrees or not. If she wants him enough she'll follow him. If she doesn't want him enough to follow him, then I don't think she wants him enough to make their marriage a success.

In fact, I look on a problem like this as a first-class test for a future wife.

UNCLE ANDY

A Nice Vaseful

WE'LL GATHER A FEW OF THESE STICKY BUDS FOR DECORATIONS, SALLY
I'D RATHER WAIT FOR CONKERS — BUT STILL ..
THE STURDY BUDS OF THE HORSE CHESTNUT TREE THAT COME OUT IN THE SPRING MAKE FINE DECORATIONS WHEN THEY OPEN, AND IT'S FUN TO WATCH THEM GROW. AS THE WEATHER GETS WARMER, THE BUDS BEGIN TO SWELL. THE SUN MELTS THE STICKY VARNISH AND THE OUTER SCALES START TO OPEN UP
NOW IS THE TIME TO CUT A FEW STEMS FOR THE VASE. ALWAYS MAKE A FEW CUTS AT THE END OF THE STEM TO GIVE THE WATER IN THE VASE A CHANCE TO SOAK IN
NOW THE WATER CAN GET INTO IT, TWINS, AND HELP TO MAKE THE BUD GROW
POPLAR CATKINS
TO MAKE YOUR WOODLAND POSY MORE COLOURFUL, GATHER SOME TWIGS FROM THE BLACK AND WHITE POPLAR TREES. THEIR CATKINS MAKE A PRETTY SIGHT, ESPECIALLY THE RED ONES OF THE BLACK POPLAR
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Traitor's Island

by MARTHA ALBRAND

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

Through the maze of intrigue, Webb could now see a possible solution—a solution he found too horrible to contemplate

She drew back in horror. "Do you suspect me, too, Webb?" she whispered

FIVE YEARS AGO, WHEN Webb Carr first set foot on the Italian island of San Ricci, only Julie, young widow of a murdered partisan, was living in the de Cresti Palace. She helped him in his work of contacting partisans until they were betrayed to the Germans.

Now, as London chief of an American legal firm, Webb is back at San Ricci to check the authenticity of a priceless Titian painting, the property of the de Cresti family, which has been offered for sale in New York.

He finds the family in residence, and Julie's cousin, Carlo, a rising young politician and the only surviving male member of the family, tells him that the painting must have been stolen. No de Cresti, he says, would ever sell a family heirloom.

In fact, Carlo has himself sold the painting without asking his grandmother Francesca's consent. Now, worried by the Englishman's investigations, he tries to break Webb's friendship with Julie, for whom he has contracted a marriage with a wealthy young nobleman.

In the village, meanwhile, Webb learns that Augusto, one of his wartime helpers, was accused of betraying him to the enemy and was killed by villagers. A relative of the dead man, Luigi, an old waiter, tells him that Augusto was merely a scapegoat, and that the real betrayer is still at large, a fact which is proved by Serafina, Augusto's widow.

Solving the mystery of the painting, however, is Webb's first concern, and when a telegram arrives revealing the name of the agent who sold it—Acuto, a disreputable dealer—he goes to Milan to find him. But Acuto is nervous and will not talk.

A little later, Acuto has another visitor—Carlo de Cresti, who demands from him the contract authorizing the sale of the Titian. Acuto refuses to give it, and after a struggle, Carlo knocks him down, takes the contract and leaves.

In falling, Acuto hits his head against an iron stove and, although Carlo does not know it, is killed.

Next day, Webb hears that Apollo, a young spiv who worked for Acuto, and the son of Augusto, has been accused of the murder.

Dr. Lunati, a friend of the de Cresti family, has a theory that the dead Augusto was shielding his son, knowing him to be the betrayer.

Urged by Luigi, the waiter, Webb sees the boy in jail, and is convinced that he did not betray him to the Germans—and that he didn't murder Acuto.

PART VII

Visit to Lunati

WEBB looked into Apollo's eyes. "Can you think of anyone who might have murdered him?" he asked the boy.

Apollo began to tremble. "I don't know," he said. "I don't know. He knew so many people. He had rich clients, too. Maybe he was blackmailing them. How should I know?"

"And how can you prove you didn't kill him?"

Luigi, next to Webb, started to lament again, "Oh, Santa Maria, how can my unhappy nephew prove he is not a murderer? Who will believe it?"

"No one," said Apollo. "I'm the son of a traitor. They'll say it runs in the family."

Webb rose. He put his hand on the frail shoulder and felt the boy shake. "I think we will have to prove that whatever you did to earn your living was a direct consequence of your father's death and that you had no reason whatsoever to kill a man who paid you well. There must be witnesses who——"

Apollo shook Webb's hand away. "Bah," he said, in the tone he had used before to Luigi, full of contempt and despair, "I don't believe in justice. You know as well as I do, *signore*, that my background is against me. To prove my father's innocence you would have to find the traitor. You won't. I tried to. For a whole year I tried. And as long as the jury is convinced that no apple falls very far from the stem, they will condemn me before the trial."

He shrugged, lighting a new cigarette. "I'm as good as dead now."

Apollo, Webb knew, was right. Circumstances were against him and any jury would, at least unconsciously, be influenced by his background. The only way Webb could help him, unless the murderer was found, was to prove that Augusto had not been guilty of treachery. The least he could do was to see that the boy got a fair trial.

Later, visiting Doctor Lunati's house nestling against the hills of Omegna, Webb saw with surprise that it looked grey and shabby and strangely uninhabited.

But when he entered it he found that its drab façade hid unexpected comfort. The furniture was strangely old-fashioned, as if for the last fifty years nothing had been changed, added or removed.

Heavy leather armchairs stood around in the library, whose bookcases showed glass fronts, several old prints hung about the walls, and at one corner an elaborately carved cabinet revealed a variety of fishing rods and flies. A door opened into the dining-room, in which the table had not yet been cleared. It had been set for two.

THE maid who had let him in came back to lead him to a narrow porch where Lunati sat playing chess with a monk.

The doctor quickly came to welcome him.

"My friend," he boomed, "what a pleasure to see you! But I had expected you before. Come and sit down. Father Anselmo and I have finished lunch. Will you have a liqueur with us?"

The father stretched out his hand to grasp Webb's, and Webb recognized in him the priest whom he had seen when he got back to the island. He was a giant of a man, well over six feet tall, and of broad build.

Next to him, the stocky doctor looked almost tiny, and Webb himself had a feeling of insignificance, as if nothing mattered quite so much as he had thought. For a moment he felt calmer, oddly certain that he had reached the end of a road and would finally have a clearer view.

Father Anselmo kept Webb's hand in his, his narrow eyes fastening with frank curiosity on the young man of whom he had heard so much. His voice was warm and kind.

"How wonderful are God's ways," he said. "Let me tell you how happy it makes me that you have survived."

He settled back in his chair behind the chessboard. Mechanically he began to set up the men again, and Lunati laughed.

"I don't mind, Father, starting all over again; yours was the better position, as usual. . . . Anyhow, we were just talking about you, Signor Carr."

"About me?"

Lunati began to busy himself pouring peppermint into large ice-filled glasses, but Father Anselmo said in his slow, careful way, "Just like everybody else. Your reappearance has naturally refreshed the memories of many. How I wish, my son, that you had found your way to me before talking to the others."

"Why, Father?"

"Because I might have convinced you to leave the past alone. Suspicion, my son, creates suspicion, as pressure causes more pressure. That's in the nature of things."

"There are things one cannot leave alone, Father, because their consequences affect the present and the future. Even if I hadn't returned, Apollo's arrest this morning would have the same effect."

"Apollo arrested? Why? What for?"

"Murder," said Webb. "The police found him hiding at Serafina's."

Lunati lifted his glass and stared into the green liquid for a moment before he

began to sip it slowly. "I heard it over the air," he said. "I felt very distressed."

"Why should it distress you? Didn't you suspect him of even worse? Didn't you tell me that you thought it was Apollo who betrayed us?" asked Webb.

Lunati shrugged. "I told you what I thought. I was only speculating. How do you know that it wasn't true?"

"He wasn't here at that particular time, nowhere near this neighbourhood. He was in Venice."

Lunati shrugged again. "Then I made a mistake. And it was Augusto, after all."

Father Anselmo suddenly rose.

"Father," Webb said, "what do you believe? Do you think it could have been Augusto?"

As if he had thought better of an impulse, Father Anselmo sat down in his chair again. He reached absent-mindedly for the little white queen. It vanished in his huge palm.

"No," he said, "and I have always deeply regretted the circumstances which led to his death. But I cannot question the wisdom of the Lord."

"But it will speak against Apollo that his father was supposed to be a traitor," Webb said hotly.

"What makes you trust Apollo?" Lunati asked. "What makes you so sure, Signor Carr, that he didn't kill this man in Milan? . . . A black-marketeer," he explained to the priest, "for whom he worked as a smuggler. A man by the name of Acuto. He was found dead on Thursday night after Apollo had paid him a visit."

"I have just talked to him, questioned him."

"I envy you," Lunati said. "I wish I could trust my own judgment as much as you do. Is there any reason why people should tell you the truth?"

Webb felt himself flushing.

"You think I am a fool, don't you, Lunati? I have a good reason for thinking Apollo innocent. What do you know about the de Cresti Titian, the portrait of a Venetian noblewoman which Carlo de Cresti claims was stolen during the war?"

"Why? Wasn't it stolen?"

"The man Apollo is accused of having murdered had some information about the painting. I have no doubt that he was killed for no other reason than to silence him. It is too much of a coincidence to assume that Apollo should have chosen the precise moment when Acuto was ready to talk, to go up there to settle some personal squabble. Besides, he had no reason to kill a man who paid him well."

Father Anselmo had listened quietly. "I'm very grateful," he said, "deeply grateful to you for having gone to the trouble of seeing the boy. Would you be willing to testify about what you just told us? It seems very valuable for a defence. Tomorrow I will go to Milan and get in touch with a lawyer."

"I saw Pancaldi on Thursday," said Webb. "Apollo fought as a partisan with him for a while. He might be the right lawyer for Apollo, if he handles cases like that."

A smile fluttered across the doctor's face. "So you went to see Pancaldi?"

Webb had a feeling that Lunati could see through him as through a piece of glass. "Did you really think I would not try to find out who the traitor was?"

"No," said the doctor. "When I saw you that night on the island, I realized that you are suspecting each and every one of us, trying to find the traitor. I don't doubt that you are secretly thinking I might have done it."

"And why not?" said Webb. "Why couldn't you have done it, Lunati? Just as easily as Pancaldi or Augusto? You were one of the four people who knew. Your reputation is by no means established. Some people call you a gambler, some a charlatan."

"My son, my son," Father Anselmo said.

"I'm both," Lunati told Webb, "a gambler and a charlatan. And I like a good life. But maybe I can convince you that I had no interest in bowing to any kind of dictatorship. My grandfather fought with Garibaldi for liberty, and I was raised in the spirit of individual freedom to such an extent that when Mussolini came to power I refused to join the party like most of my colleagues. Perhaps you can imagine what that decision meant?" He leaned back in his chair. For a moment he seemed to forget Webb's questioning eyes.

"My father was a doctor, too," he went on. "Here in Omegna. The de Crestis made me their doctor, introduced me to their friends. So much for the 'charlatan.' As far as money is concerned, it is true I like to gamble. Always did. I had inherited just enough to keep me alive. In periods of boredom, Campione or San Remo or any roulette table seems the only stimulation that doesn't involve a great effort. Sometimes I win, more often I lose." Lunati sat up. "Any more questions, *signore*?"

Father Anselmo, as if to prevent a new argument, heaved himself from his wicker chair.

"I have to go. I've already stayed too long. And I want to see Serafina. . . ."

Lunati saw the priest to the door, and when he came back he seemed deep in thought shaking his head slightly to himself.

"I am sorry you won't believe me, Carr, but I feel, with Father Anselmo, that it is wrong to stir up old hatreds and upset the whole neighbourhood."

"I have to if I want to save Apollo."

"You will be able to counterbalance any prejudicial feelings against the boy by saying that you think his father was innocent. Why not stop your inquiries?"

"If neither you nor Pancaldi betrayed me, who did? Do you think it possible, Doctor, that there was some fifth person who knew . . . someone who worked close with the man Pietro, from whom we took our orders?"

"Possible," said the doctor. "Why don't you leave it at that?"

Webb lit a cigarette. "The easy way out? My lawyer's mind demands a better case." He leaned forward a little. "And there is another point, one I haven't mentioned before. I'm not following up this matter only to save Apollo or to see justice done or merely to satisfy myself."

"But——"

"Because of Julie."

"Julie," repeated the doctor, sitting up. "You mean Giulia de Cresti? What has she got to do with it?"

"There is gossip in the village," said Webb. "Luigi, Serafina, even Pancaldi in Milan. They seem to have been wondering for a long time about the part Julie might have played. If Apollo is judged guilty or something goes wrong, I'm afraid they'll turn openly on her. I have to clear her."

Lunati didn't answer. A deep frown appeared on his forehead.

"Clear her?" the doctor said finally, his voice oddly impersonal. "I'm afraid, Carr, that if you don't drop the whole thing you will succeed in doing just the opposite."

"I'm sorry, I don't understand. Are you trying to imply——"

Lunati interrupted: "What I'm going to tell you now I'm telling you to protect her. I don't want any harm ever to come to her. She was a mere child then. I hope you understand that. And I hope you understand that because of your probing, things have gone so far already that you simply have to forget any personal feelings and save her."

Webb stared at the doctor. "I don't understand," he said. "I don't understand any of what you are saying."

"Well, Carlo's life seemed more important than yours at the time."

His words made no sense to Webb. "What do you mean, Carlo's life?" In his mind he could hear Julie's voice, trying to convince him to let her help, telling him she had nothing to lose. "But he was dead. The last news she had of him was that he was killed in a bombing raid in Rome."

Lunati nodded. "We all thought Carlo was dead. And we grieved about him. And suddenly a rumour came through that he had been seen alive."

Slowly, carefully choosing his words, Lunati went on, "One night a man came to this house asking for shelter. He had escaped from a German prison camp. In the camp he swore he had seen Carlo de Cresti, and that Carlo was going to be executed. He had had no chance to talk to him, but others had told him Carlo's name and fate. I told Giulia.

Very high above them, a small white cloud sailed in the sky. Webb kept his eyes fixed on it.

"And only when it was all over did I hear from Father Anselmo that Giulia had sent a letter to Reinoldi, the Fascist mayor. The father said he would never forget how he had found her crying in his church."

The letter Augusto had delivered that fateful day. . . .

The little cloud had dissolved in the pale blue of the sky. Gone as if it had never been there.

"It can't be Julie who betrayed me."

"Not betrayal," Lunati said. "Never betrayal, Carr. Rather a bargain. A question of choice. A conflict which only she could solve when she was alone with her conscience. To understand, you must know how deep her love for the family is. She looked upon Carlo as her brother. He and Jacopo, her husband, were all she had ever loved.

"I remember when they were still boys and had come down with scarlet fever. When I went in to examine Giulia, I found her praying in her room, offering her life for those of her cousins. Childish, yes, overwrought with emotion, like many children of that particular age. She learned to control herself growing up, but I have never doubted that her feelings remained unchanged. For nothing in the world would she have sacrificed you, her people, herself, except for the family."

Webb did not answer and the doctor said helplessly, "Only if you know them well can you understand how important it is to them that the name of de Cresti should live on. It's what makes them what they are; and, without exception, each of them would rather die than——"

Luigi, the old waiter, had been the first to voice suspicion. Webb had not even paid attention, too sure in his heart that it never could have been Julie. Then Serafina had pointed at the girl he loved, and he had merely thought that in her desire to clear her dead husband's name she would accuse anybody.

Pancaldi had tried to explain logically his reasons for suspecting her, and Webb had not listened. The lawyer's reasons were wrong, but his instinct had been correct, and now Lunati, not bitter or spiteful, but only wanting to protect her, was making the accusation.

Webb rose abruptly. He found his cigarettes in his pocket and pushed one between his lips. It hung oddly in the left corner of his mouth, and Lunati, watching him closely, said with a trace of violence in his voice: "Who are you to judge? Or I? Our task on earth is to learn to understand the impossible, to forgive, so that we are forgiven."

Then he realized that his words did not reach the young man, and a great tiredness spread slowly over his face.

"Who else knows? Does the family? Does Carlo know?"

"I doubt it. No. I don't think she would ever have told him. It is not in her character to ask for gratitude. She wouldn't hold others responsible or burden them with what she had to do. If I could only make you understand——"

Once more, Webb looked at the doctor. "I understand," he said, "I finally do." He turned and, without another word, left the house.

The soft hues of evening coloured the landscape when Webb finally reached Orta and took a boat. He didn't bother to use the formal entrance to the *palazzo*, but steered into the private little landing from which a path barred by an iron door led into the deserted garden. The family had already gathered for dinner.

As on the morning of his return, it was Angelina who met him in the hall. She looked at him uncomprehendingly when he told her to fetch Julie at once. Finally, giggling to herself, she went off.

He stood there waiting impatiently, his eyes fixed on the family tree painted across the walls: WHEN YOU ENTER THE PALAZZO DE CRESTI, YOU ENTER HISTORY. The motto seemed to jump at him. The last de Cresti, he thought.

He heard Julie's light running steps, and spun around.

"Where have you been?" she said. "All day long I've been waiting for you." She looked over her shoulder as if to make sure that no one was watching them, before she came closer, smiling up at him. "Come in," she said.

Webb stared at her. He shook his head. "I've got to talk to you. Let's go somewhere where we can talk."

She hesitated only a second, then walked ahead of him into the quiet

THIS WEEK'S COVER

IT WAS ten years ago that Michael Critchlow saw the little boy in the cover gazing up at Auguste Rodin's sculpture, "The Thinker," in the Tate Gallery. Critchlow was determined to paint the scene, but somehow he was sidetracked. Then recently, when he was looking at a book on sculpture, it all came back to him. Off went Critchlow to the gallery to check details. "The Thinker" he found in the vaults—still thinking. The boy was easy to recapture, but Critchlow says: "I wish now I had asked him what he was thinking about that day."

garden. "What's happened?" she asked. "What has happened, Webb?"

But he didn't answer until they had reached the huge old cedar where they had sat the first day of his return, and he had realized that he still loved her.

The stone bench still held some of the warmth of the afternoon sun. For a moment he sat, feeling her hand softly on his arm. Then he got up again, walked away a few steps and came back to stand before her, looking down at her. He didn't know how to start.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Julie said. "What's wrong, Webb? Why don't you tell me?"

He began to speak slowly, haltingly. "Since I came back," he said, "ever since I came back people have been talking to me. All sorts of people. Wondering about you—wondering about the part you might have played four years ago."

The brown eyes widened, fastened on him in an expression of horror. He looked away as if he could not bear to see her face, and added quickly: "They think that you betrayed me."

"They think that I betrayed you," Julie stammered. Her voice changed. "Who thinks so, Webb? Who thinks that I betrayed you?"

"There was a letter," he said. "A letter you wrote to the Fascist mayor of Novara, Reinoldi, the day of the raid, and asked Augusto to deliver. They think that some kind of information——"

"I won't warn you again about hitting low!"

She interrupted him. "But that's incredible. Yes, I wrote a letter. Of course I did."

Her face was very pale, but her eyes were bright with anger. "There had been a rumour that Carlo, whom everyone had believed dead, had been seen in one of the German prison camps. I had no way of finding out. Reinoldi was the only one I knew in contact with the Germans. I wrote to ask him if he could possibly find out for me."

"But you never told me."

"How could I? Don't you remember, you were away those last two or three days? You returned only to pick up Augusto. There was no time. You were not even expected back the night of the raid."

He closed his eyes for a moment. He wanted to believe her, yet he did not dare trust his heart. He had to know.

"Julie," he said, "are you sure that there was nothing in the letter which could have given us away?"

"Inadvertently, you mean?" She shook her head. "I worded it so carefully. I didn't even know if I should write at all. I was afraid Reinoldi might use the occasion to come over personally." And then she saw his face, his eyes looking at her in terrible tenseness. She drew back.

"Webb," she whispered. "Webb, are you suspecting me, too?"

"I didn't pay attention to anything that was said," he told her. "I never bothered about what I thought was mere gossip, vindictive rumours or an attempt to clear Augusto, but——"

"But you do now?"

"Julie," he said, "Julie, isn't it possible that in your love for Carlo . . . that you wanted to save him . . . that you might have sacrificed everything to keep him alive? I've never doubted you until I heard this afternoon how terribly excited you were when that news came through."

"You talked to Lunati then," she said. "Only Lunati could have told you. No one else knew."

He saw her eyes narrow.

"Lunati only told me to protect you, Julie. He tried to persuade me to stop my inquiries. He was afraid that people would turn openly on you."

She shrugged. "Lunati," she said . . . "those others . . . but you? You believed him." She rose and came to stand close to him. "You believed him, Webb."

"Haven't things ever piled up on you like that, one after the other, so that you can't help starting to believe? You yourself told me that nothing mattered to the family but to go on and on. You were raised in that tradition. Carlo was the last de Cresti, your dead husband's brother, someone you loved deeply. Don't you see?"

"You dare to stand there and tell me that you thought I could have done it!" she cried.

"I don't think it any more."

"But you did. You thought it possible that I could have done a thing like that and stood by to let Augusto take the blame . . . Serafina, his children?"

The instant she phrased so simply what he had not dared to think through in all its consequences, the preposterousness of his accusation struck him in its full impact.

"Oh, darling, darling," he said. "No, I didn't. Not wholly. Things were so mixed up. There were only four people who knew, and Lunati sounded so convincing that, for a moment——. Don't you see that I came straight to you because against all odds I kept trusting you?"

She moved away from him, and though the space between them was no more than a few steps, it suddenly seemed to stretch into infinity.

"I love you," he said. "I love you, Julie. You must know that."

"Don't speak of love to me!" Her voice was fierce with contempt. "You don't know what love is! The kind of love I mean! The only kind I want! Love is limitless; love doesn't know any doubt. You never loved me, Webb."

He tried to catch her in his arms, but she pushed him away.

"It's all over, Webb."

"Let me explain, darling. Can't you understand that I had to clear you?"

"So that you could go on loving me? No, thank you, Webb."

"But you don't realize that——"

"Go," she said. "Go. Whatever your reasons, I don't want to listen to you any longer. You didn't come to ask me for an explanation. You came to accuse me. I can never forgive you for that."

A few days later in Milan, Webb wearily left the tenement building in which Acuto had lived for so many years. The people had resented and feared his insistent questions concerning the night of the murder.

Already interrogated by the police, they mistook him for a detective and, afraid of being drawn into the crime, fearful of being called as witnesses, they had shrugged their shoulders. A smuggler named Apollo Bongrani had been identified as having been seen leaving Acuto's office after midnight. What more did he want?

As he walked, away a packet of cigarettes dropped out of his pocket and fell to the street. Like small vultures, children rushed from everywhere, gathered with silent speed, then separated to vanish around the dark corners into darker doorways. Only one child was left, a girl crying softly to herself. Webb pulled a few lire from his pocket.

"There," he said, "stop crying."

The child, he saw now, had an artificial leg. She smiled up at him.

"Oh, thank you, *signore*. A thousand thanks, *signore*!" she said, and stopped and stared at him. Then stretched out a dirty, calloused palm, returning the present.

"What's the matter?"

Instead of answering, the girl dropped the notes and limped away. Webb shrugged; picked up the money and started to walk on, when suddenly the odd behaviour of the child made him swing around. She had not gone very far. He went after her.

"Hey!" Webb said. "What's your name?" He put his hand gently on the small bony shoulder. "Can't you hear me?"

"Luisa."

"And where do you live?"

She pointed vaguely. "Over there.

"Why are you afraid of me, Luisa?"

"You were there," said the child. "You were there that evening. I saw you."

Webb remembered a group of children lined up under Acuto's window.

"Yes," he said. "And so were you. What were all the children doing there?"

"We always waited. He used to send one of us over to the restaurant to fetch his dinner."

Webb stood still in the small puddle of light from one of the lanterns. He had no way of telling how old the child was. She was small, but most wartime children were small, with emaciated bodies and strangely old faces.

"Did he send you? Did you bring him his food that night?"

"He didn't send any of us. He didn't eat that night."

Suddenly he understood why she was afraid of him. "Luisa," he said, "they have found the man who killed Acuto. The police arrested him this morning."

Luisa began to sob. "Signor Acuto was such a nice man. He was good to me. He had a daughter himself; that's why he liked me. Sometimes he would give me her old things. Beautiful clothes. I could never keep them. My father took them away to sell them. Signor Acuto was very angry with him."

"You live in the same house, then?"

"In the cellar. I liked him a lot."

"Luisa," he asked, "can you remember Thursday night? Do you know if someone came to see him?"

Unexpectedly, the child said, "Yes. The handsome one."

Webb caught his breath. "Tell me," he said gently. "Tell me what happened."

"I was thirsty," said Luisa. "I hadn't very much to eat. I went into the hall to get myself a drink of water from the tap. And a man was knocking at Signor Acuto's door, calling his name."

"What did he look like?"

"Very, very rich," said the child, lowering her voice in awe. "He wore a gold ring. I heard it make a noise when he knocked on the iron door, and the light from the corridor made it blink."

They all wore that ring, a broad gold band, engraved with the coat of arms of the de Crestis—Francesca, Lucretia and Graziella, Julie and Carlo; only Renata didn't wear it.

"Can't you remember what time it was?"

"After midnight," the child said promptly. "The church bell had just struck and everybody was asleep. He did not stay long. He walked away very quickly."

By the time Webb crossed the Swiss border and arrived in Lugano the same evening it was too late to call on Paolo Suter, the Swiss agent who had handled the deal for Acuto.

He was groggy with fatigue and excitement, and the questions he had been asking himself all the way still flickered in his mind.

Why should a man in de Cresti's position risk murder? Even if he had sold the Titian without Francesca's knowledge, wouldn't he expect to settle the matter with his family somehow? Was he afraid that his contact with the black marketeer might leak out and harm his career? But wouldn't murder jeopardize everything a hundred times more? Had Acuto been blackmailing Carlo about the Titian or about something else?

To be concluded next week

WHO'S FOR THE ALPS?

ALREADY thirty-six readers of JOHN BULL have enjoyed a ten-day visit to Switzerland as part of a *Bullets* prize; look at last season's party here, revelling in sunshine and glorious scenery beside the mighty Rhône Glacier.

Now, with this week's opening of *Bullets* £12,000 holiday prize campaign, comes an opportunity for you to win an increased First Prize of £750 *and* a holiday for two in lovely Lucerne. The same Swiss holiday thrills go with the Second Prize—and hundreds of other awards are also awaiting good *Bullets*.

Reserved seats on trains, luxurious accommodation in a lakeside hotel and a 138-mile Alpine coach tour have all been booked by Cooks for this season's *Bullets* party. If you want £750 and the holiday of a lifetime, see that you post your coupon below by Monday, April 11.

"Bullets" £12,000 Holiday Campaign

opens this week with prizes value over

£1,000

£750 FIRST PRIZE CASH plus SWISS HOLIDAY for TWO

£50 Second Prize, also plus Swiss Holiday for Two

Other Prizes:—£25, £20, £15, 5 of £10, 10 of £2 10s., 25 of £1,

50 "Bullets" Seasons,
3,000 "Good Shots"

"SUNDAY DINNER" Bonuses

Delicious Game Pie accompanies each of the twenty chief cheques won with *Bullet* which was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

ANOTHER SWISS HOLIDAY OFFER

in this "Bulletin"

To get the help of *Bulletin* and *Gazette*, including extra winners for your guidance, enclose label below with your *Bullets* or Crossword entry this week.

Add 2, 3 or 4 Words to any of these "EXAMPLES"

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

In The New Britain
Dictator Dollar
The Peace Flower
Life's Ups And Downs
Everybody's Enemy
Blessings Of Wealth
The Underdog
Right And Left
Disappointed Man
Fools Rush In, But
Fertile Soil
Missing
Her People
Battle Of Wits
Father's Bookie
Feeling Homesick
Must Be Slipping
Given Away
With A Bit Of Beef
Trouble In The Village

Incomplete "Examples" —see instructions

Without Our .....
Every Little .....
.....Won't Work, So
Robbed Of.....
..... Darling
If.....Doesn't Look Out

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,675 (or Xword 627), "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

RULES 1. First Prize to best *Bullet* received, others in order of merit—the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee, enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate for *Bullets* and Crosswords for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.
4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that results of this week's Contests in *Bulletin* and *Gazette* dated April 30 and in JOHN BULL dated May 7, also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding.

CHIEF WINNERS — "BULLETS" No. 1,670

FIRST PRIZE, £750 and THREE WISHES: W. J. Fanner, "Walburton," Littlestairs, Shanklin, Isle of Wight: WITH A LITTLE CROSS KISS COMMUNISM GOODBYE, WORKMATES!

SECOND PRIZE, £50: W. J. Bolt, 18 Harbour Street, Lerwick, Shetland: PRINCESS PEACE —GO *East*, YOUNG *Woman*!

THIRD PRIZE, £25: C. W. Bristowe, 8 Oak Road, Tiptree: WITH A LITTLE LUCK—WE'LL LOSE BOB LEGALLY!

OTHER AWARDS: £20: Mrs. F. L. Davis, 101 Highworth Road, New Southgate, N.11: WITH A LITTLE SQUEEZE—"PIP" FLIES. £18: Mrs. W. Smith, 4 Hungate Road, Sherburn-in-Elmet, nr. Leeds: OUR CHILDREN—"STUMBLING UPON THINGS"—HURT. £16: W. R. Cloudesley, 28 Southfield Park, North Harrow: WITH A LITTLE GARDENING—DAD'S CONTENT—*Very* LITTLE! £14: Mrs. O. May, 77 Bradford Road, Farnworth: PRINCESS PEACE—IN TOWER, IF POWER—. £12: W. A. Bell, 9 South Crescent, Thirsk: WON'T BE LONG NOW—BEFORE CRIPPS RELIEVES—*Suspense*! £10: W. H. Bannister, 8 Carisbrooke Avenue, De-la-Pole Avenue, Hull: MIGHTY LIKE A STUMBLING-BLOCK—THINKING YOURSELF "ONLY PEBBLE—." £10: B. Bell, 10 Greystones, Ballywalter, N. Ireland: WITH A LITTLE EXTRA—MOUTH, LITTLE EXTRAS MOUNT.

For ten winners of £2 10s., see last week's "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*.

All prizes have been posted, including 50 prizes of £1 and 3,000 new "Good Shot" Awards.

CASH, FOOD and NEW XWORD PRIZES

£100 CASH 1st PRIZE

AWARDS value £25 are to be shared by First Runners-up—useful new "Signpost" prizes are now awaiting all Second Runners-up—and 20-lb. Food Parcels go with all prizes value £1 and over.

THIS WAY TO WIN

FIRST complete Square in INK, giving your Answers to Clues below. Then, if you wish to enter *one* extra Answer to any *one*, *two* or *three* Clues, give each such word in full in "Extra Answer" Form below Crossword Square.

XWORD 627

Across Clues

1. Unfortunate this now and again leads to termination of engagement
3. Man assessing this likes to have all the available facts and figures
8. Wise cyclist will take this when it's wet
9. Lack of balance may be attributable to these
10. Some of us here suspect there's a certain amount of this about Soviet policy
11. If this isn't done precisely, it's best not to do it at all
13. In grand opera there is sometimes something unnatural about one

Down Clues

2. Dodging these isn't easy sometimes
4. Stubborn young rascal is apt to become this when severely questioned about his conduct
5. May keep bad time in several ways
6. The air of some is depressing in the extreme
7. Sometimes one gives a picture of desolation
8. Families can easily be extravagant in their use of these
11. Opening one calls for a certain amount of care and thought
12. May often be described as worse than useless

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N	A	■	■	■	■	8 C	A	■	E
9 D	R	U	■	S	■	R	R	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	10	U	N	K	■
11 S	H	A	■	E	■	■	■	O	12 P
H	E	R	■	Y	E	T	■	B	A
O	S	I	E	R	■	S	O	■	■
■	627	13 D	U	E	■	■	H	A	S

In adjudication, all Extra Answers will be read in combination with each other and with all Answers in your Square. Thus your completed Square with one extra Answer to *one* Clue will represent *two* full Squares (Entry-fee 6d.), Square with one extra Answer to *two* Clues will represent *four* full Squares (Entry-fee 1s.), and Square with one extra Answer to *three* Clues will represent *eight* full Squares (Entry-fee 2s.). Use ink, not pencil.

Single Square with 6d. P.O. or stamps covers dispatch to you of *Crossword Gazette* dated April 23.

Winner—sender of most meritorious set of Answers received—decided by Adjudication Committee on basis of aptness and accuracy. Ties divide. Entrants limited to one prize per Contest and to entry requiring not more than 4s. entry-fee. Signature below is agreement to Rules.

CLUE	EXTRA ANSWER	Total Fee
No.		6d.
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(Total fee shown includes entry on Square)

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2 BIG CHEQUES WON XWORD 622

WINNING WORDS. ACROSS: 1, Crocked. 4, Rain. 7, Fire. 8, Pan. 12, Mode. 13, Tear. 14, Spare. DOWN: 1, Coat. 2, Knives. 3, Yield. 5, Vain. 6, Wire. 9, Robes. 10, Waste. 11, Jeer.

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Awards value £25 for 1st Runners-up shared by 58 entrants. New "Signpost" Prizes awarded to all 2nd Runners-up.

John Bull's Free Advice Service

EVERY WEEK JOHN BULL helps readers who seek the advice of our team of experts on a wide range of personal problems. Parents may ask about backward children, teenagers about career prospects, other readers about the Health Service, income tax or a particular domestic worry.

Many readers testify to the assistance given by the Free Advice Service. For instance, C. R., of Bexhill, writes: "Your efforts on my behalf really produced results. I now have my extra pension — plus arrears. You settled in three weeks what I had failed to achieve in three months."

Readers should send their queries (other than medical) to the JOHN BULL Free Advice Service, 186 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. A stamped addressed envelope for reply should be enclosed.

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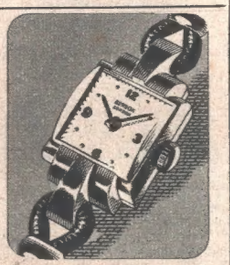

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ALICE IN POSTERLAND

Drawing by HANNA

A Tou-candid Friend

"Do you know what that is," asked the Toucan.

"A Guinness, of course," cried Alice. "You do ask funny questions—what do you take it for?"

"Strength," replied the Toucan. "Forgive me if I appear curious."

"You can't help looking curious," said Alice kindly. "I mean *singular*," she went on hurriedly, seeing the Toucan frown. "I mean, there's nothing like a Toucan—except another Toucan, of course."

"Then I'm like Guinness," said the Toucan, mollified.

"There's nothing like a Guinness except another Guinness, as the saying goes."

"Where does it go?" Alice asked.

"It goes to show," replied the bird. "It goes to show what toucan do."

G.E.1453.F